THE MAN WITH A THUMB

W. C. Hudson

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THE MAN WITH A THUMB

THE

MAN WITH A THUMB

BY

W. C. HUDSON

(*BARCLAY NORTH*)

AUTHOR OF "THE DIAMOND BUTTON: WHOSE WAS IT?"
"JACK GORDON, KNIGHT ERRANT, GOTHAM, 1883,"
"VIVIER, OF VIVIER, LONGMAN & CO.,
BANKERS," ETC., ETC.

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THE MAN WITH A THUMB.

CHAPTER I.

"WHY! IT IS BLOOD.

OCTOBER of 1879 and a brisk evening. The hour is nine. People walk rapidly under the stimulus of the cool night air.

One of the number, however, does not. Closely examining the buildings on either side of the street, he moves along slowly. Sometimes he stops on the curbstone and gazes intently at a house upon the opposite side. Thus he makes slow progress until he reaches the corner of Broadway and Bleecker Street. Here he stops and peers down the cross street. Apparently he debates with himself as to which way he shall go. Slowly he walks off in the direction of the Bowery and—into the middle of events which powerfully influence his whole life.

He was a tall, athletic man. A careless observer would have said he was nearly forty. But he was in fact barely thirty-one. The stern, deep-seated lines of his face, suggesting settled grief, or harsh experiences in life, made him appear older than he was—these, and an expression of habitual melancholy.

His course lay upon the lower or south side of Bleecker Street. Crossing Crosby, he walked a few rods and then stopped in front of a house upon the opposite side.

Certainly, the reason lay in no peculiarity of the house. It was not particularly distinguished from its neighbors. As a matter of fact it bore a resemblance to them all, for it was one of a row of old-fashioned houses all built at the same time. Though degraded from the high rank they had once held, they had not lost entirely their pretentions to dignity. Dingy they had become, but that air of spaciousness, so lacking in our modern architecture, they still possessed. In spite of the degenerate times upon which they had fallen, they still had the power to force you to consider the days when they were prosperous and fashionable.

This particular house was of brick, three stories high with a low basement. The windows of the second and third stories were ablaze with light, and at them were to be seen, even at that hour, the occupants of the rooms they lit, at work. The first or parlor floor was dark. The front door, with its rounded casement, minutely carved, to which a flight of three or four marble steps led, was wide open, but there was no light in the hall. Between what were once, at least, the parlor windows, fastened to the brick front was a new oval sign, displaying a young woman whose yellow bodice was very low, whose blue skirts were very short, and whose red boots were very high, dancing upon

rose-colored clouds, a suggestion of ethereality utterly destroyed by the robustness of her nether limbs and the abnormal breadth of her bared shoulders. While she danced she held a black mask before eyes roguishly but fixedly cast, indiscriminately, upon all passers-by. Over her head were the words, "Madame Delamour"; under her feet the single one "Costumer."

Under these parlor windows, stretching across the whole width of the house, was a long, narrow sign bearing the words, "Weinhandlung."

One of the windows of the basement front had been transformed into a door. On either side of this door was a tub painted green. In each tub was an evergreen tree, slowly turning yellow. The iron fence which once had separated the sunken area from the pavement had been removed. The light streamed forth brightly and invitingly from both door and window.

"That is the house," muttered the young man on the other side of the street. "To what base uses we may return, and so forth. I have a fancy to see the inside of it."

Crossing the street the young man entered the "Weinhandlung." Inside he swept the room with his eyes, and an expression of astonishment mingled with disappointment passed over his face.

To accommodate the business of the dispenser of wines, the partitions had been torn out, so that the whole basement floor was one room. Where the hall had been the bar was, and behind the bar

a stolid-looking German, smoking a long pipe, contemplating without the suggestion of an expression upon his large, round face, a group noisily playing a game of cards. In the rear of the room were two billiard tables. In the corner on the left as one entered was a round table at which there were four chairs and on it several newspapers.

The young man sat himself at this table, taking the chair in the corner, which, while it secured him comparative privacy, enabled him to command the room at a glance. At one of the small tables in the middle of the room, and in close proximity to the card-players, sat an old gentleman, perhaps seventy, deeply engrossed in his newspaper. As the young man entered he lifted his head. Something in the new-comer's appearance arrested his attention. He laid his paper upon his knees and followed the young man with his eyes, and his face took on an expression of perplexity. Though he resumed reading, his eyes ever and anon wandered to the young man in the corner. Soon his paper lost interest for him, for he again laid it on his knees and looked into space over his spectacles, without losing his thoughtful, perplexed expression.

The young man summoned the stolid proprietor and ordered a stoup of wine and a cigar. His orders complied with, he struck a match, and as he held it up in the air with his right hand, until the sulphur should have burned away, he held his cigar within an inch of his lips with his left hand. The old gentleman, watching him covertly, smiled;

the wrinkles on his brow vanished, the perplexed expression passed away, and nodding to himself approvingly, he returned to his paper. By-and-bye he beckoned to the proprietor, and by a gesture indicated that he desired the empty glass at his elbow refilled. An unusually loud outburst came from the card-players ; with a smothered exclamation of disgust, he picked up his glass and crossed to the table at which the young man was sitting, saying politely:

"Shall I be intruding if I seat myself at this table? Our friends, the card-players, are boisterous ; they annoy me."

"By no means," replied the young man. "I imagine every vacant chair in the room belongs to the man who claims it."

With a bow, the old man sat down.

"Perhaps so," he said, "but an etiquette obtains, or should obtain even here, and I would not intrude upon one wishing to be alone."

"I am alone," returned the young man, "not because I wish to be, but because, in a whole cityful of people, I am."

"A stranger to the city, then?" inquired the old man.

"Yes, and no," was the reply, in the manner of one propounding a riddle. "I am not a stranger, for I was born here. I am, because I have been continuously absent for the past eight years. I walked the streets to-day without seeing a face I knew, and I do not know where to go to find one I formerly did know."

"New York is a large city, and like all large cities its face takes on a new expression each year. You have but just returned then?"

"This morning."

"It is strange the more celebrated places did not attract you."

"I stepped out of my hotel near by for the fresh air, and I strolled hither under the influence of a recollection of my boyhood, almost infantile, days."

For an instant only, the old man peered over his glasses sharply at his companion, and then said:

"I am much attached to this house, not because my habit leads me here nightly, but because I have been familiar with it ever since I was a young man."

The old man lifted his glass and sipped his beer, apparently unconscious that he had said anything to attract the increased attention the young man gave him.

"Even younger than you are now," he continued. "Lord! Lord! what dinners I have eaten—what gay times I have had in this very room. A young friend of mine—we boarded in Chambers Street together in those days—bought this house while it was yet building, and when it was finished, carried his sweet young bride into it. And a great house-warming we had too. I was opposed to it—that is, to the house; I thought it too fine for him to begin on; for you must know, young sir, there were few finer houses in this city when this was built. Yet he could afford it. Young as he was, he was the head of a flourishing business, built up by his

father, who had died and left it to his only son, with a number of old and experienced clerks. Yes, indeed, no house in this city stood higher than that of Dorison & Co."

As the old man indulged his reminiscential vein, the younger kept his dark eyes fixed upon him, and at the mention of the name of the firm the color crept slowly into his cheeks.

"Yes, there have been gay times in this old house," continued the old man. "I have seen the beauty and chivalry of old New York gathered within these walls. Sometimes when the weather is fair I venture out to the park to see the ladies drive by, whom as young girls, in all their bravery of silks and laces, I have seen sweep up and down these stairs. Happy times, indeed! I was always welcome here as the confidential friend of the head of the house, and I love it in its degradation. I have seen sorrow and mourning here, too. I have followed each one of Dorison's children through the door above to their graves—save the youngest, a boy. But the time came when this house was not fine enough for Dorison, and he moved into a brownstone front in Twenty-third Street. There disaster fell upon him. His wife died and he was never the same man. He retired from business—a mistake, for the time hung heavily on his hands, and he drooped. His only interest was his only son—only child in fact. I saw him daily if in town, but in those years, having interests abroad, I was away from town a great deal."

He interrupted himself to sip his beer. Had he looked at the young man he would have seen a most singular expression on his face ; high color showing through his dusky skin and eyes intense and burning. The old man did not, for he continued calmly;

"Dorison and his son lived in this fine house alone for some years. Then one morning early, a servant entering the library found Dorison bent over the table at work. Wondering at the early rising of his master, he spoke. Receiving no answer, he went up to him. Dorison was dead. He had died in the act of writing a letter. The most singular thing of it was, that his executors found that he, whom we all supposed so rich, had not a dollar. The very house he lived in was mortgaged to its full value."

The young man leaned forward, and extending his hand laid it upon the arm of the elder man, saying with great decision :

"You have a purpose in telling me this story ! "

The old man looked up with a surprised air as he replied :

"What purpose, young sir, could I have in telling such a story to an entire stranger? "

The young man made no reply for a moment, but continued to gaze steadily into the eyes of the elder one, as if thinking profoundly. Then he said in a deep, low voice, quivering with emotion :

"I will continue the story. Mr. Dorison was fond of the young man his son, treating him indulgently and giving him a most generous allowance.

The son was a youngster caught up in the whirl of fashion—a member of the leading clubs, following what you doubtless would call a fast life, but as compared with others not fast. If extravagant, he brought no trouble upon his father; if reckless in his life, no disgrace upon the name of Dorison. The letter his father was writing, when he was so suddenly stricken with death, ruined the son. To whom this letter was addressed, or what the father's motive in writing it, never was known, and it is doubtful now whether these things ever will be known. The letter ran thus:

"My Dear Friend: The end is well-nigh reached. Indeed, if you cannot immediately give me the assistance I need, it is even now reached. With such assistance and a few years more of life, all can be repaired. I am a broken man in spirit and in health. The last few years I have been tortured as no human being ever was, I believe. I have been compelled to sit helplessly by and see a fine property devoted to covering the consequences of crime; to making good forgeries on my own name, against which I could not even lift my voice in protest; to repairing losses of others by robberies and defalcations; to stopping the wheels of justice, which if permitted to go on would have brought exposure and disgrace; and all the while have been compelled to sustain and conceal the knowledge that all this was done and brought upon me by an ungrateful son, who—"

"Death fell upon him," continued the young man, "the moment he had condemned the son. To whom was this letter addressed? Crushed and

agonized, the son in a frenzy sought the one to whom it was written as a means of proving that the condemnation of the son by the dying father was untrue. All efforts were unavailing. The fact of the condemnation was bruited about; it became known in the clubs; it became public property; it was published in the papers; the police undertook to bring the crimes alleged against the son home to him, but they were no more successful than he was in his efforts to disprove them. His friends fell away from him; the doors of his acquaintances were closed against him; he was cut on the streets. Efforts being made to expel him from one club, he resigned from all and fled the city, practically penniless, under an assumed name. Seeking employment in a Western city, he remained until a few days ago, when, under an impulse he could not restrain, he returned to the city of his birth after eight years' absence. I am he—John Dorison—disgraced by his dead father, not by himself."

"I was sure of it; I was sure of it," murmured the old man.

"You too," continued the young man, his voice trembling with the violence of his emotion, "you too, a friend of my father, believed and do now believe the libel my father left me as his only heritage."

There was something so despairing and even pathetic in the attitude and intensity of the young man, that the spectacles of the old gentleman became dimmed with moisture. There was no

appeal for belief in the tones of the young man. The elder read utter hopelessness in the intense dark eyes bent upon him; he saw the grief underlying the strong face which he had newly aroused was an old settled grief, not one finding expression in wild gestures and fierce words, but one that had come to abide with the young man forever, with which its possessor had become familiar as with a daily companion from whom he never expected to be parted.

The old gentleman, regarding the face of the younger closely and for the first time openly, replied slowly and forcibly:

"No; I did not believe the charge when I first heard it; I never have believed it; I do not believe it now."

The reply was unexpected. Dorison fell back in his chair with a gasp, staring blankly at the elder man. At the end of eight years, and for the first time, he had found one who believed him innocent of the charges.

"You—believe—me—innocent—of—those—vile—charges?"

"I do," emphatically returned the old man. "When your father died I was absent from the city. After I returned and I learned the circumstances, I sought you to say so and to offer my assistance, but you had left the city."

Still staring at the elder man as if not comprehending what was said to him, Dorison remained

silent. Suddenly, and the question came as if driven from a gun, he asked :

" Why ? "

" Because," replied the old man slowly, " I knew something of your life ; because I had heard your father praise your conduct, your character, and your rectitude, and, therefore, believed that in his sane mind he could not mean you ; because of certain matters within my own knowledge, perhaps it were better to say suspicions, which I have never mentioned to any man and which I will not now, at all events until I can look over my papers and refresh my memory. That letter of your father's has always been an incomprehensible mystery to me, and the most charitable construction I can put upon it is that he was not a sane man when he penned it. But what became of his great fortune ? "

The young man laughed bitterly.

" Your words, the first of belief in my innocence I have ever heard, are grateful and comforting. If your belief were based upon more substantial reasons, it would give me what I am now utterly without—hope. My life has been ruined by that unfinished letter. Such is the only result I have reached after eight years of endeavor to fathom the incomprehensibility."

" My dear young sir," said the old man, kindly, but with a tone of pain in his voice, as he leaned forward and laid his hand upon the arm of the younger one, " I can understand your bitterness. I sympathize with you from the bottom of my

heart. I admire you, that with the strong feeling you naturally have, you have given expression to not one word of abuse of the parent who did you this almost irreparable injury. However, it is time for me to go to bed. Come and see me to-morrow at my office. We will talk this matter over then and see what can be done. Here is my card. Good-night."

The old man went out briskly. Dorison remained staring at the card, which bore these words, "Job Nettleman. Commercial paper negotiated. No. — Broad Street, New York City."

He fell back in his chair in a confusion of thought. Light seemed to be breaking upon his dark horizon. Would the sun rise? One man believed him innocent. It was not much, to be sure, but he could not let go the fact. His memory was aroused to acute activity. He lived over again those agonized days following the death of his father; his frenzy, his wild rebelling against his fate, his desperate endeavors to escape the evil consequences of that unfinished letter; his mad efforts to prove himself guiltless—all this passed in review before him, and again he felt the sharpness, the bitterness, the agony of those days, and he became oblivious to his surroundings.

Suddenly he was startled into consciousness of external things by a cry of horrified surprise. It came from one of the card-players:

"Why! it is blood."

CHAPTER II.

A MYSTERIOUS TRAGEDY.

THERE was commotion in the room at once. Every one sprang to his feet. Crowding about the table from whence the outcry came, they looked up to the ceiling, from whence the drop which had excited the exclamation had apparently fallen.

A long, irregular crack in the ceiling was plainly visible. At one end, that over the table, a small, dark spot was to be seen. Dorison, who had come with the rest, sprang upon the table. Hardly had he assumed an erect position when the small, dark spot, resolving itself into a globule, dropped off, barely escaping his clothes, being immediately succeeded by another spot.

"It is blood," he said. "It is dripping through this crack. It must come from the floor above. Who occupies it?"

All eyes were turned upon the German proprietor, who, in reply to this mute questioning, said:

"I don't know. Dey haf shoost move in. Dey vos kostumers."

"Some one may have been murdered," suggested a voice in the crowd.

In an instant, as if by a common impulse, every

one ran out and mounted the steps leading to the front door, leaving Dorison alone with the proprietor. The trampling of many feet upon the floor above and poundings on the door for admission was heard.

Clambering down from the table, Dorison asked the German if there was not a rear entrance to the first floor.

"Yaw," replied the German. "Go dat door owit and oop the stairs."

Dorison hurried through the door pointed out and found, at his right, a flight of steps which he ascended quickly. Pushing open the door at the top, he entered a sheltered veranda. He tried the door leading into the hall, but it was locked. He sought the first window opening on the veranda, and on trying to lift the lower sash it ran up with ease. A curtain obstructed his way, which he pushed aside and stepped into a large, square room, unfurnished, save by two chairs and a worn carpet. The gas burned dimly at a side jet.

He crossed the room to the sliding doors, which were closed, but he found no difficulty in throwing one back. Heavy curtains confronted him; parting them he passed into a room well lighted.

He recoiled with an exclamation of horror. At his feet lay the body of a woman weltering in her own blood. Of steady nerves and strong self-control, yet the scene sickened him, and he staggered back almost fainting, the while those in the hall were thundering at the door.

The woman had fallen forward, and as she had done so her face had been turned toward her right shoulder, her right arm stretched out as if she had grasped at something and missed it. Where the neck was exposed an small gash was seen from which the blood had spurted and streamed in torrents, covering her dress and all things in her immediate vicinity. A small stand, evidently heavily weighted with articles of clothing of fantastic color and shape, had been overturned in the struggle which preceded the murder, for the goods were scattered some distance and the woman had fallen upon them.

Recovering almost immediately from the first shock of surprise and horror, Dorison bent over the body. It was that of a young woman, perhaps twenty-six or seven. The face was prepossessing, and he conjectured she might in life have been called handsome.

He made a rapid survey of the room. At his right and in front of the mantel-piece was a long, narrow table, with deep drawers in it and the top of which was covered with blue felt. Against the wall, on all sides, were fitted drawers surmounted by shelves, filled with goods. Over the windows and the two doors opening into the hall, curtains were drawn closely.

Immediately at his left hand, within his reach, was a small round table. On it were two articles. Barely conscious of his act, he stretched forth his hand and took them up. One was a ring, the other

a small, old-fashioned oval portrait in a narrow gilt frame.

He was astonished—overwhelmed.

The portrait was a picture of his father, taken at least twenty years before his death. He could not trust his senses. Was his imagination affected by the horror of the scene and playing him tricks? He looked at it again. There could be no mistake. He examined the ring. He recognized this too. He had seen it in his boyhood days, a hundred times, on his father's finger.

Confused and overwhelmed, and under an impulse he could not analyze, he slipped them both into his pocket.

There was a new movement in the hall and new steps, which had in them the sound of authority.

A voice said :

"We can't open that door."

"Then we'll break it down," said a stern one in reply.

Aroused, Dorison undertook to step over the prostrate body at his feet, intending to open the door. As he did so he saw a piece of paper in the hand of the murdered girl. Moved by an uncontrollable impulse, and without reason governing him, he bent down quickly and gently disengaged it. Hastening now to the door, as he was about to push back the curtain, he perceived upon the floor a large piece which he picked up and pocketed under the same singular impulse.

Drawing the bolts, he opened the door, just as

two policemen placed their shoulders against it to burst it open. They fell upon him, and without his assistance would have fallen to the floor.

A man in citizen's clothes pushed his way between the two policemen and hastily swept the room with his keen eyes. Observing the body on the floor, he turned to the officers and said :

"Guard that door. Let no one in or out."

Walking over to where the body lay, he closely examined it and the surroundings. Then he came back to Dorison and demanded :

"What were you doing here?"

"Who are you?" demanded Dorison in return.

"An officer of the law. Answer my question."

"I entered from the rear, while the others were trying to force an entrance from the front."

The officer, who was the most celebrated detective of his day, bent a piercing look upon Dorison, who, however, did not flinch from the scrutiny.

"We'll see about that. Dolan," he said, turning to an officer in uniform, "arrest this man."

"I shall not attempt to prevent you from arresting me," said Dorison quietly, but firmly. "But you must make no mistakes, for I shall not forgive them."

This calmness and self-possession made an impression on the officer.

"How is it that you were here alone?" he asked.

"I have told you. After the alarm was raised, all who were in the saloon below ran up to this door except myself. I asked the proprietor if there

was not a rear entrance, and being told there was, came up that way and made an easy entrance."

"Yaw. Das iss so," remarked the proprietor of the saloon, from the door. "Dey vos all gone owit an' he ask me. I say go oop de back stairs."

"He was drinking in your saloon then?"

"Yaw. He drink ein glass wine and smoke ein cigar, and talk mit old Mr. Nettleman all de night."

"The gentleman sat with the rest of us, Captain," said another voice from the hall. "When the man cried out that blood was dropping on his cards, the gentleman jumped on the table to see where it was coming from."

"I see," said the Captain, in an altered tone, and turning to Dorison said: "It was imprudent of you to attempt an entrance before the officers were called."

"Perhaps," returned Dorison, with a sober smile. "In such emergencies, however, men are rarely prudent. The prudent thing for me to do was to walk away entirely. As it is, I presume I have made a witness of myself for the coroner's inquest."

This was so true that the detective smiled and regarded him with more favor.

"What is your name?" he asked.

Dorison hesitated. He had registered himself at a neighboring hotel under the name he had borne since he left New York eight years before—James Dudley. He knew the next question would be his address, and if he were to give his proper name an examination of the register would discover the dis-

crepancy, with a resulting suspicion. If, on the contrary, he were to give his assumed name, he would, if application were made to Mr. Nettleman, since he had not given his assumed name to that gentleman, be at a disadvantage in that quarter. He perceived his dilemma without seeing his proper course.

His hesitancy aroused the suspicion of the detective. With increased sternness the demand was repeated.

Under the belief that less trouble would result from using his registered name, he replied :

"James Dudley. I come from Dubuque, Iowa. I am registered at the Grand Central. I arrived in town at seven this morning. I have not been in New York for eight years before."

"Why did you hesitate in answering?"

"Because I vainly thought by concealment of my name I might escape the annoyance of being a witness, but a moment's reflection showed me the absurdity of the idea."

This was promptly said, but frank and ingenuous as the reply seemed to those who heard it, the detective, looking into Dorison's eyes, saw something there which did not satisfy him.

"Do you know this Mr. Nettleman?"

"I have known about him all my life—since boyhood."

"Does he know you?"

"Yes."

At this moment two men in citizen's clothes, who

were admitted by the uniformed officers, entered and took up their stations respectfully behind the detective.

"What did you see when you entered?" asked the detective, after a long and keen examination of Dorison's face.

"That," replied the young man, pointing to the body on the floor. "I had but just entered when you came."

The detective did not permit his eyes to follow the pointed finger of Dorison, but still continued his stern and searching examination, while Dorison fully appreciated that he had become an object of suspicion.

There was a slight diversion at the door. A man of average height, inclined to be stout, perhaps sixty, with shaven face, whose only striking feature was a pair of eyes, small, dark, keen, active and restless, who had been standing without the door, pushed his way in. The officers guarding the door made a motion as if to stop him, but, upon an almost imperceptible nod from the Captain, permitted him to enter.

The new-comer crossed to the table covered with blue felt, his hands in his vest-pockets, and leaning against the end furthest from the body, sent his eyes into every part of the room with rapid darts, finally fixing them on Dorison, without abandoning the motionless attitude he had assumed on entering.

The detective began a systematic inspection of the body, the room, the entrances thereto. He

took the names of all present and those in the saloon when the drop of blood was discovered. He closely questioned the proprietor. The only fact he elicited was that two weeks previously the rooms had been rented by a woman, who announced that she would conduct a costumer's business, and that the saloon proprietor had never seen but one person he knew to be connected with the business, and that an old woman, and she but once. Brought in to examine the body, he declared he had never seen the woman in life, and did not know who she was or where she came from.

The detective turned to Dorison again :

"When you ascended those back stairs, was the door at the top open or shut ?"

"Shut."

"Did you try the door leading from the veranda to the hall ?"

"I did, and found it locked."

"How did you enter ?"

"By the window, next the door."

"Was the sash raised as it is now ?"

"No ; I threw it up."

"It was not fastened then ?"

"No."

"How did you enter this room ?"

"Through those sliding doors."

"Were they open as now ?"

"No, I threw them back."

"Was there a light in the back room ?"

"Yes ; just as there is now."

Turning to one of the men in citizen's clothes, at his back, the Captain said :

" Jones, go into that yard and see if it is possible for a man to make his escape over the fence and reach the street."

" It would be possible for a man to descend those back stairs, enter the saloon below from the rear, and so gain the street," said the old man with his hands in his vest-pockets, without moving.

The detective looked at him sharply and replied :

" That is true."

" He even might have sat down and drank beer afterwards and been in the saloon when the blood was discovered."

" That also might be true," returned the detective.

" The proprietor ought to know whether he served a customer whom he did not notice enter the front door."

" Again that may be so ; I'll inquire."

" Also," continued the old man, " if you are speculating, your man might have entered the saloon and slipped out to gain this room by the rear as this young man did, and slipped back again after he did the job."

" Ah," said the detective, turning a look of apparent renewed interest upon Dorison. He took the proprietor aside and questioned him on the points raised by the old man. The German was quite certain Dorison had never stirred from the chair he seated himself in when he first entered,

until the blood was discovered; he was in full sight and could not have moved without his knowledge; besides, he had talked all the time with Mr. Nettleman, a fact that attracted his attention, since, though the old gentleman came there nightly, he rarely talked with any one. As to the possibilities suggested by the old man with regard to others, he could not speak so positively, though he did not think that anything like that suggested by the old man had occurred, because the saloon had not been so full that he could not take cognizance of every one in the place. When asked to look over the throng in the hall to see if all were there who were in the saloon when the blood was discovered, he said after examination that while there were some in the hall who were not in the saloon, there was one who was in the saloon who had stood by him in the hall when he was called in to see if he could recognize the body, who was not there then. He was a stranger who had come in early and drank brandy. He could not describe him, save that he was not an old man, was not tall, and had brown hair and mustache.

"That undoubtedly is the man I want," said the detective.

Sending Dorison to the Headquarters in charge of one of the policemen, in order that a statement as to himself and the events of the night might be taken, and telling the officer to put a man on to shadow Dorison after he left Headquarters, the officer busied himself with completing his exami-

nation of the premises. Finally, leaving an officer in charge, he went away, accompanied by the remaining officer in plain clothes.

"This night has not brought forth much," he said, "but I suppose we can find out from the woman who rented the rooms who the girl is. We must hunt her up the first thing to-morrow morning. That must be your job."

"Go to the agent who rented the rooms, I suppose?"

"Yes; that's the quickest way."

"Do you think that fellow Dudley is mixed up in it?"

"He? No, but he's concealing something. I suspect he does not want to be too closely questioned about himself. But he hasn't anything to do with this case."

"The old man turned up again prompt."

"Yes," replied the Captain. "He seems to have the scent of a buzzard for a dead body. Strange fancy, isn't it? I once knew a fellow who had a fancy for going to every funeral he could hear of, whether he knew the people or not. This old fellow is a sharp old duck and has some excellent ideas. But who he is I can't tell."

CHAPTER III.

"HOW FORTUNE PLIES HER SPORTS."

JOHN DORISON awoke the next morning betimes, with an uneasy sense of having passed through a nightmare. It was some moments before he could recall the events of the night previous. When he did, he leaped quickly from his bed, for by them was also recalled a resolution to seek Mr. Nettleman as early as possible, to inform him of the assumed name he had given the police the night previous, and to beg him to assist him in preserving his *incognito*.

Dorison did not fear implication in the murder, though he knew that the detective regarded him with more or less suspicion. What he did fear, however, was that if his proper name were known it would awaken recollection of the events attending and the consequences of his father's unfinished letter. The police at that time had been employed to search for the crime his father's letter had charged him with.

Therefore he hastily dressed, the while he cursed the impulse that had induced him to return to the city of his birth, where everything served to remind him of his undeserved disgrace. Absently thrusting his hand in his pocket, he came upon the

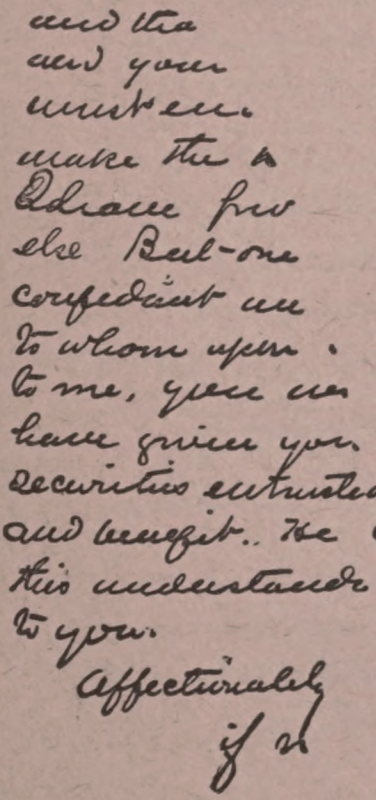
portrait and ring he had obtained the night previous.

It was with a shock of surprise that he drew them out, for he had forgotten them.

Taking them to the window he gave them a careful examination.

There could be no mistake.

The portrait was that of his father, and the ring was too familiar for him to make an error concerning it. But how came they in the room where he had found them? Who was the young woman in whose possession they apparently were? If, as he supposed, she was no more than twenty-five, she could have been only about seventeen when his father died. The portrait was taken when she was about five. It was unexplainable. Or, could Madame Delamour be a dealer in old relics and jewelry? It was worth examining into. But how?



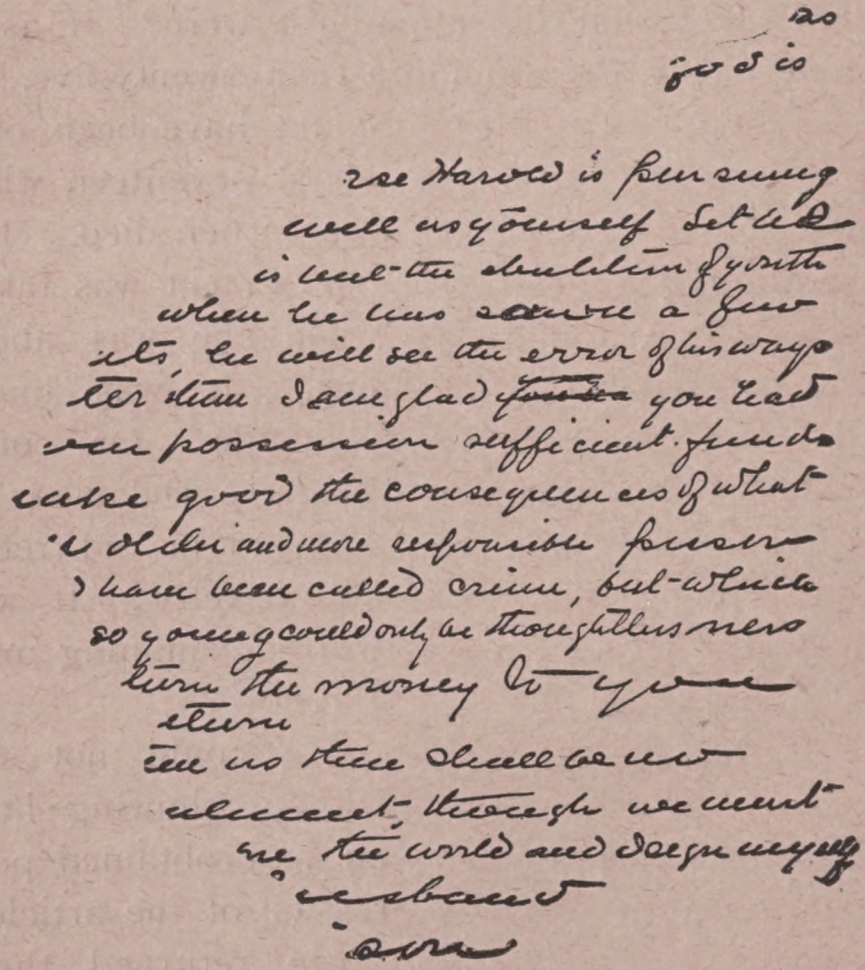
He could not stir without showing how he had obtained possession of the articles.

He returned them to his pocket, and in

doing so encountered the slips of paper he had found at the same time.

Both were written upon, and he was startled by the similarity of the writing to that of his father. He endeavored to obtain sense of what was written. The pieces were evidently torn from letters. The smaller one, that which he had taken from the girl's fingers, conveyed no intelligence to him.

Dorison puzzled long over this, but could make nothing of it. He examined the other slip. It was in the same hand.



A little more intelligence perhaps was to be gained. Some one named Harold had evidently been doing wrong and had caused some one to pay out money to repair the consequences of the wrong-doing. The more he studied the two scraps of paper, the more he became convinced that the writing was that of his father.

He was greatly agitated and much confused. Having exhausted speculation, he descended to the breakfast-room, but with no appetite, for the emotions by which he was possessed robbed him of all relish for food. He contented himself with a cup of coffee. Arising from the table he saw it was after eight o'clock, and thinking it would be fully nine before he could reach Mr. Nettleman's office, he determined to set out at once.

He did not notice that as he set foot upon the pavement, a slight, undersized man followed him out of the hotel, nor that he entered the same stage he did, nor that, on reaching Wall Street, this individual followed close after him and had business in precisely the same direction. He was too much preoccupied in the events through which he had just passed to give heed to matters about him.

As it was, the slight, undersized individual followed him directly to the door of the building in which were Mr. Nettleman's offices, even ascending the stairs to the second floor where they were situated.

The old gentleman was at his desk, intently

reading the morning paper. As Dorison entered, he looked up and cried out with animation:

"Ah, is that you? Do you know that a murder was committed last night in the very house where we met?"

"Yes," replied Dorison, sitting down beside the desk. "I was still there when it was discovered. Indeed I may claim the honor, if honor it be, of discovering it."

"Oh," said the old gentleman, highly interested. "Were you the one who first saw the drop of blood?"

"Not that, but I was the one who forced my way through the rear, found the body, and unfastened the door for the police."

"But the paper says it was a man named Dudley—James Dudley. That is as near as the papers get to it."

"The papers are right on the information given them," said Dorison. "It is about that very name I have hurried so early to see you this morning. You will recollect I told you that when I left the city eight years ago, I did so under an assumed name. That was the name I used, and under it I registered when I returned to town yesterday morning."

The old gentleman recollected well, and Dorison hastily recounted his fears that the police would discover the assumed name through Mr. Nettleman if not warned in time, and giving his reasons for desiring to preserve his *incognito*, he begged the old gentleman to assist him in preserving it.

At this point they were interrupted by a caller. Handing the morning paper to Dorison, the old gentleman sat himself down with the stranger in a remote corner of the room, where he held a whispered conversation.

After the stranger departed, Mr. Nettleman returned to Dorison, his fine old face wreathed in smiles.

"Not a moment too soon. That was an agent of the police come to inquire about you, just as you had anticipated. Oh, I was discreet! Do not be alarmed. I vouched for you. I assured him your name was Dudley, that you had arrived in New York yesterday morning after an eight years' absence, and I told him the one he was inquiring about was you sitting there. I threw the mantle of my friendship and protection about you."

Well pleased that he had moved so promptly, and congratulating himself over his narrow escape, Dorison attempted to lead their conversation back to the subject of the evening previous, but there was another interruption.

A short, stout, elderly man entered, whom Dorison at once recognized as the old man who had pushed his way into the room of the murder, with both hands in his vest-pockets, the night previous, and who had done not a little toward directing suspicion toward himself.

As he entered, Mr. Nettleman cried out jocularly:

"Hello, Simon the Cellarer! Come here and sit."

The old man crossed the room with a contorted

face which required the aid of imagination to recognize as a smile.

As he sat down, Mr. Nettleman in high spirits said, turning to Dorison :

"My young sir, I want you to know this man. He is my cousin, who was brought up with me. Simon Cathcart. I call him Simon the Cellarer. Did you ever hear of Vidocq ? There he is. Only a greater one. He's a ferret—a ferret, sir."

The old gentleman leaned back in his chair greatly amused over his own wit and the perplexed face of Dorison.

All the time the sharp little eyes of the new-comer were keenly scrutinizing Dorison.

"My cousin," he said slowly, "is a very funny man. He thinks it very funny that I, who have spent my life as a detective in the West, having accumulated enough money to make me independent at least, should, having nothing in the world to do, follow from interest occasionally my old business. Well, I don't object. I get even with him, for he has to look after my investments for the privilege of being funny at my expense. It was you," he continued, breaking off suddenly into a new subject, "who brought me here this morning."

"I," cried Dorison in surprise.

"Yes. When you were giving an account of yourself last night, Cousin Nettleman was mentioned as having talked with you, and I came down to see what he knew about you."

"You don't suppose me to be connected with

the murder, do you?" asked Dorison, amused by the directness of the old man.

"No. I know you are not. But, young man, you are not a good actor. Any one could see you were concealing something. The man who examined you saw it at once. You are an object of suspicion. You are shadowed now."

"Me? Shadowed? How do you know?"

"I do know it, and that is enough," said the old man positively.

"Ah!" cried Mr. Nettleman, enthusiastically, "this is the very man to help us. Simon, do you recollect the day we went down to Coney Island last summer, when I told you at dinner that strange thing about my old friend Dorison?"

"Perfectly well."

"And how he was found dead with a letter written before him?"

"Yes, charging his only son with certain crimes."

"The same. And you recollect I said I believed the son to be innocent?"

"Yes. You said that the letter was to be accounted for on one of two grounds. Either Mr. Dorison was insane, or, that if he had been permitted to finish his letter it would have been found he did not charge his son with those things."

"Precisely."

"And I told you that if you had stated correctly the words of that letter, the second ground fell and you'd have to stand on the first. And I further said that it would be a very pretty case to work up."

"Precisely. Well, this young man is the son."

There was no expression on the old man's face as he turned it upon Dorison, but his eyes showed a greater interest.

"You gave the name of Dudley, last night?" he said.

"Yes," replied Dorison. "That is what I was concealing. After my trouble, and when I fled the city, I changed my name."

"I see."

"Now," said Mr. Nettleman, briskly and quite excitedly, "I recognized him last night by a trick he has of handling his cigar precisely as his father did, besides his strong resemblance, so I sought him in conversation. More than that, I have promised to aid him in trying to get at the bottom of this mystery. Simon, will you assist?"

"Yes. It's a pretty case, and it will please me to unravel it if I can."

Much agitated and not a little moved by the enthusiasm shown, as well as the conviction evinced by Mr. Nettleman that he was innocent, he failed to notice the manner in which Cathcart had taken the case to himself and quietly assumed that he only could unravel it. He got up from his chair to walk about to quiet himself. As he did so he thrust his hand in his pocket and felt the portrait and ring.

He returned quickly.

"You say," he said earnestly to Mr. Cathcart, "that you saw I was trying to conceal something

last night; I was. Something had occurred between the time of my entering and my admittance of the police, which I did not speak of—which I was concealing."

"Ah!" said the ex-detective, interested at once.

Dorison took the portrait from his pocket and handed it to Mr. Nettleman, saying:

"Do you know that picture?"

"Do I know it? Why, of course I do. It is a picture of your father taken nearly thirty years ago. And a very good picture it is. Do I know it? Yes, indeed, and I can tell you who took it. Fredericks did. I was with your father when it was taken. He had two, one of which he gave to me. Where did you get this one?"

Without replying, Dorison took from his pocket the seal ring.

"Do you recognize this?"

Much astonished, Nettleman took the ring in his hand and examined it closely.

"I gave that ring to your father," he said, "the day before he was married. He gave a half a dozen of his young friends a dinner that day, and we each made him a little present. This was mine."

He handed it back. The ex-detective was an interested observer.

Dorison now asked Mr. Nettleman whether he had any letters or documents in his father's handwriting.

"I ought to have plenty of his letters. Let me

see. I did all his insurance for years. I gave up that business in 1861. Let me look at my '60 box. You are younger than I am, take that step-ladder and hand me from that upper shelf the box with '1860' on it."

Dorison did as he was requested and brought the box to the old man, who, opening it, ran over its contents and finally picked out a letter or two.

Dorison handed him the two fragments of paper saying :

"Please compare the handwriting on those two fragments of paper with my father's letters and tell me what you think."

The old gentleman, much excited, did so, and exclaimed :

"It is the same. There can be no doubt about it. There is no doubt about it."

Dorison, reaching out his hand, recovered the two fragments of paper, and turning to Mr. Cathcart, said :

"Last night, as you know, I reached the room where the murder was committed first and alone. On a small, round table near the sliding doors I found this portrait and the ring. In the hand of the murdered girl was this smaller slip of paper, which I took from it. On the floor this larger slip. You can imagine my amazement on finding my father's portrait and the ring I had so often as a boy seen on my father's finger. Hardly knowing what I was doing I placed all in my pocket, when

I knew the police were about to enter. This is what I was really concealing."

Mr. Nettleman looked with astonishment on the young man, almost helpless in surprise.

"A rather serious thing to do," said the ex-detective, "but I think I would have done the same thing had I been in your place."

"I have no regrets now," replied Dorison. "But I am puzzled to know how they got there, and what connection there could have been between that girl and my father."

The ex-detective got up, and placing his hand in his vest-pockets, walked up and down the room in a deep study, the others watching him as he walked.

After a time he said to Dorison :

"You want to find out the mystery of that unfinished letter, and to prove that the charges under which you have rested for eight years are unfounded ?"

"I do, most earnestly."

"I earnestly want to find out who committed that murder. I am impressed with the idea that in the discovery of the one will be found the revelation of the other. Well, then, let us join our forces and work—give ourselves up to it and do nothing else."

"There is an obstacle as far as I am concerned," said Dorison.

"What ?"

"I am without funds. I work for my living, and must return to Dubuque to my position."

"There is none," cried Nettleman. "I have plenty, and—"

The young man interrupted the impetuous proffer with an indignant gesture, saying:

"I am not an object of charity."

"Will you take employment from me?" asked Cathcart calmly. Perceiving the young man to hesitate he added: "The pay will be $175 a month and expenses—employment to continue until the murder of last night is ferreted out."

The young man's blood flushed into his face, and he inclined a glance full of wonder upon the one making to him so singular a proposition.

"I mean it," added Cathcart. "I had determined to enter upon the case of the murder before I came here, and I foresee I shall need just such a man as you are. It will be hard work, and you will find me a hard taskmaster. I offer you small wages because there is the additional incentive in the possibility of the discovery of the secret that worries you. Come, is it a bargain?"

"Where is your profit?" asked Dorison.

"That is my affair," sharply replied Cathcart, and seeing Dorison's face darken, he added, "There is plenty of profit for me, but I am not going to tell how or how much."

"I will accept the employment," said Dorison.

"I do not see why I am pushed aside," said Nettleman reproachfully. "Do you think I have no interest in this matter? I am comparatively rich, young man, and what I am, I owe to the

aid your father gave me over many years. That mystery which has clouded his name has been a sorrow to me these many years, and I've wanted to clear it up, without seeing my way clear to beginning until now. I can do but little more than contribute to the expenses of this search."

"We will arrange that matter between us," said Cathcart, before Dorison could interpose a word. Then, turning to the young man, he said: "Do you now go straight to your hotel and stay there until I call upon you. Before you begin work I must find some means to get that shadow off your track."

With this he hurried off, leaving Dorison and Nettleman together, astonished at his abrupt departure.

CHAPTER IV.

"THE HEARING EAR AND THE SEEING EYE."

CATHCART made his way hastily to Pine Street, where he entered the office of a real estate agent, one who had charge of the Bleecker Street property. The agent was willing to tell all he knew, but it was not much. About two weeks previously an elderly woman had called upon him to rent the floor where the murder had taken place. She had said that the necessity of earning an income had only recently made itself felt, and she wanted to open a costumer's business, with which, in her younger days, she had been familiar; that while she could, if it were required, present references, still, as she had for twenty-five years been regarded as independent in circumstances, she did not care to call upon them, and would therefore pay the rent quarterly in advance; and this she thought was all the more necessary as she had determined to conduct her business under the name of Madame Delamour; as a matter of fact her name was Farish—Mrs. Emma Farish—and her address was No. —, East Sixteenth Street. Who the young woman reported to have been killed in her place was, he did not know.

Upon this information, Cathcart determined to go directly to Mrs. Farish.

On nearing the house, he saw a group of people gathered at the foot of the steps of the dwelling. A policeman stood at the foot of the steps, and another guarded the door at the top.

"They have brought the body of the girl to the house of Mrs. Farish," he muttered to himself. "She must have been nearer than a mere employee."

Reaching the foot of the steps, he said to the policeman: "Who is in charge?"

"Captain Lawton."

He mounted the steps, and though the guardian of the door stopped him, he said, "I am on this business and must see Captain Lawton."

He stepped through the door and encountered the Captain in the hall.

"They have brought the body of the girl here then?" he said.

The Captain stared at him, and without reply pointed to the door leading into the parlor.

He entered. Accustomed as he was to such scenes, this one shocked him.

On the floor lay the body of a gray-haired woman. As in the other case, she was weltering in her blood. The two had been killed in a similar manner. The Captain had followed him to the door, keenly observant of him. Turning, he said:

"Mrs. Farish?"

The Captain nodded in acquiescence.

"Madame Delamour?" he added.

An expression of wonder passed over the detective's face, and bidding Cathcart follow him, he led the way upstairs and into the front room on the second floor, closing the door after him.

"Now then," he said, "what do you mean by that?"

"By what?" asked Cathcart in return.

"By calling Mrs. Farish, Madame Delamour."

"Because Madame Delamour was Mrs. Farish."

"How do you know that?"

"The same way you do."

"But I don't know it."

"One of your men called on the agent who has charge of the Bleecker Street property, before I did, and was told the two were one, as I was. Madame Delamour, an assumed name to conduct the business of costuming under—real name, Farish; address, this house."

"Ah! I was called here before he could report. But who are you? What are you interfering in this case for? What interest have you in it?"

"What!" said Cathcart, with as near an expression of surprise as he could achieve. "I have lived for a year within gunshot of your headquarters, and you do not know who I am?"

"No, I don't," replied the Captain sternly.

"Not very flattering to my fame," said Cathcart, as he extended a card to the other. "That was my business card little more than a year ago."

The Captain read the card with an unmistakable start of surprise, while a slight flush overspread

his face. A change took place in his manner at once.

"What!" he cried. "You are the celebrated Cathcart?"

The Captain might well have felt abashed. However little the average citizen might know of the fame of the insignificant appearing man who had just revealed himself, there was not a police officer, of the upper grade at least, who had not heard of the exploits of Cathcart, known to criminals as "The Devil of the West," of his deeds of courage in the hunting down and taking of desperadoes in the most desperate parts of the Western country. His reputation for courage amounting to recklessness, for shrewdness unrivaled in its results, for ability in unraveling tangled knots, and for persistency when on the trail, equaled only by that of a sleuthhound, was known wherever policemen talked.

"I knew you had gone out of business," said the Captain in a deferential manner, "but not that you had come to New York."

"Yes," replied Cathcart, "I've made my pile, and as I've passed sixty I wanted to retire. They would not let me alone out there, so I came back to where I was born and where my relatives are."

"I see; are you on this business?"

"No! Perhaps! That is, I am not employed. It is a nice case. If I touch it, it is for the fancy of the thing."

"What do you know about it?"

"Only what I have told you."

"The two murders are connected?"

"No doubt of it; killed the same way. When was this done?"

"Last night, some time between eight and eleven. The servant was permitted to go out at eight and returned at eleven, through the basement door, the key of which she carried. No lights were in the house, except in the hall, as was usual when she went to bed after the family. Supposing Mrs. Farish and her daughter, the only inmates of the house, had retired, she turned out the light and went to her room. This morning, descending the stairs at the usual hour, she made the discovery of the murder and gave the alarm."

"Where is the daughter?"

"She went away yesterday forenoon—where the girl does not know. She has not returned yet."

"The young woman killed in Bleecker Street."

"The devil! Yes. It must be."

"Let us find that out first. Whose room is this?"

"Mrs. Farish's."

"Then we'll look here first."

Cathcart's eyes swept the room, taking in everything with one comprehensive glance. Between the windows was an old-fashioned bureau, and on either side of the glass were two ledges in the frame about midway of the glass. On each a photograph—one of an elderly woman,—the other of a younger one. Cathcart pounced upon them. Taking the one of the younger person he cried:

"There she is. You have questioned the servant."

"Yes."

"Let us have her up again, in view of the new phase this case has assumed."

Upon the summons of the Captain, the girl came into the room, worn, trembling, and frightened.

"Whose picture is that?" asked Cathcart.

"Miss Anne's," replied the girl in a faltering voice.

"Who is Miss Anne? Mrs. Farish's daughter?"

"Yes, sir."

Cathcart handed the picture to the Captain, and showing the other to the girl, asked whose that was.

"Mrs. Farish," replied the girl.

"The mother of Miss Anne?"

"Yes, sir."

"Madame Delamour?"

"Sir," said the girl, wonderingly. Cathcart neither repeated nor explained the question, but handed this photograph to the Captain. Then bidding the girl to be seated, he in a kindly tone began to question her. He induced her to tell of her discovery of the murder, and without interference permitted her to exhaust her story of the part she had played.

"When did Miss Anne leave the house?" he asked, when he had finished.

"After breakfast yesterday morning."

"Was that her usual habit?"

"She's gone away after breakfast for a week, coming home at six."

"Did Mrs. Farish remain at home during this week?"

"No, sir, she would go out later and come back earlier."

"Were Mrs. Farish and her daughter in the habit of being out a good deal?"

"No, sir, not much. About three weeks ago they began to be out a good deal, but not regular until a week ago."

"Did Mrs. Farish have any business?"

"What?" asked the girl, unable to understand.

"Did Mrs. Farish have to earn money?"

"No, sir; she owned this house and had money in the bank."

"How long have you lived with her?"

"Going on three years."

"Did Mrs. Farish have plenty of visitors—company, you know?"

"No, sir. Very few. Sometimes a neighbor would call in."

"Didn't she have any relatives to come and see her?"

"She hadn't any. I've heard say she hadn't but one, and he lived out West."

"Who was he?"

"She didn't say. Once in a long time a young man would come to the house."

"Who was he?"

"I don't know."

" Didn't you ever hear anything about him ? "

" No, sir."

" What did he look like ? "

" I hardly know. They always seemed to know when he was coming, and Miss Anne watched for him and let him in herself. They always took him in the parlor and shut the door. When he went away Miss Anne always looked as if she'd bin cryin' and Mrs. Farish was down like. Once I heard Miss Anne say, " He's got no mercy ; he's all selfishness ; he'd take all you've got and leave nothing."

" What did Mrs. Farish say ? "

" Nothing."

" Can't you tell me what this young man looked like ? "

" I never saw his face but once, and then just a glimpse. I was coming up the basement stairs when he was let in, and saw him go into the parlor. He was tall and slim, and had brown hair."

" How often did he come here ? "

" About once in three months."

" How long did he stay when he came ? "

" Sometimes an hour ; sometimes longer ; once he stayed all afternoon. I laid a plate for him for supper, but he did not stay. Just before he went away he was angry and talked loud."

" Was that the only time you heard him angry ? "

" Yes, sir."

" Did Mrs. Farish and her daughter go out visiting ? "

"I never knew them do so. They lived by themselves."

"Did they go to church?"

"Every Sunday, twice a day, down here to the church on the corner. The minister, Mr. Carman, used to come once in a while to see them."

"Was Mrs. Farish pretty comfortable about money?"

"She seemed to be, sir."

All this time the Captain had been a close listener, not interfering in the examination. Cathcard having finished, he dismissed the girl.

"What do you make of it?" asked the Captain.

"Nothing. The case is as dark as night. That young man is worth looking after."

"Yes. I had got that point out of the girl before. You got two additional ones—that he was angry the day he stayed so long; and that the daughter cried and the mother was sad whenever he came. I have searched the house systematically from top to bottom and found nothing to throw any light on the deed or the people,—no letters or documents in the house."

"The place in Bleecker Street wants a thorough search now."

"It will have it to-day."

"If that young man is all right, he'll turn up of his own accord; if crooked, he wont."

"His failure to turn up will make the more reason for looking for him. But how and where to begin the search for him?"

To this the old detective made no reply, but thrusting his hands in his vest-pockets, walked out of the room, and descending the stairs entered the parlor, where the body lay, carefully noting every article in the room and their disposition. His keen eyes perceived something lying on the floor near and partially under the body. He beckoned to the Captain standing at the door and pointed to it. The officer, bending down, said :

" Ah, a glove—a man's glove."

" A clue," said Cathcart.

CHAPTER V.

"LETS IN NEW LIGHT THROUGH CHINKS."

THE Captain stretched forth his hand to pick up the glove, but Cathcart restrained him. Looking about the room he found a small straw fan. Carefully lifting the glove at the wrist, he skillfully thrust the fan under the glove so that it rested upon the fan without its form having been disturbed.

"The hand of the man that will fit this glove is the hand of the man who did this deed," said Cathcart, straightening up and carrying the glove into the light to examine it. "Criminals have been brought to justice from a clue less than this."

The Captain was deeply interested.

"The hand this glove fitted," continued Cathcart, "is not that of a working-man, yet one whose bones are naturally large, and whose knuckles and joints are prominent. See how large and prominent that second knuckle is. Moreover, the man who wore this glove is a nice dresser—careful about his appearance and the fit of his clothes—a bit of a dandy. He either is or tries to be a gentleman. Nor does he spare cost in his clothes. You see the kid is of the best quality, but this is the point—that glove was made only for the hand that wore it. See!

The peculiarity of the hand is the thumb. It is long and bent backwards at the end ; it is out of all proportion in its size and length to the fingers. It is almost a deformity. You might examine the hands of all the men in the city and not find one like it. Yet see how perfectly the glove has fitted the hand—every finger exactly filled, the thumb also—not a wrinkle in the glove. That glove was not got by accident, nor picked out of a general stock in a store. One so chosen, if it fitted the thumb, would have been too large for the fingers ; if it fitted the fingers, the thumb couldn't have gotten in. You wanted to know where to begin your search for the young man who called at stated intervals. There you are. Take care of that glove. Put a bell-glass over it ; it's precious."

The Captain, either because he was much impressed by the old detective, or because he was too great for jealousy and was anxious for all the aid he could secure in a dark case, took the glove and the advice with good grace.

Cathcart, bending over the body, saw something calling for greater attention, and crossing to the other side, kneeled down and narrowly examined the body.

"Robbery," he muttered. "Something has been torn from her breast, either before or after she was murdered."

The Captain nodded :

"I was waiting to see whether my conclusion would be yours," he said. "But mark you, she has

money and jewels on her person. They have not been taken."

"Valuable papers perhaps," said Cathcart.

At this moment there were the sounds of many feet at the door. The officer passed the word that the coroner and his jury were come to view the body.

The two detectives retired to a rear room, reaching which Cathcart turned suddenly upon the Captain:

"You have that man who first entered the Bleecker Street room shadowed?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"There is something suspicious about him. I want to know who he is?"

"Do you connect him with the murder?"

"No; yet he seemed to get into those rooms very quickly. There was a familiarity with the house about that."

"It was all explained."

"Yes, but—well, he had something to conceal."

"He had. He gave you a false name."

The Captain wondered how this sharp old man had managed to learn so much in so short a time.

"Do you recollect the Dorison case of eight years ago;" asked Cathcart.

"I ought to," replied the Captain. "It was the very first important affair I was engaged on. It was a strange case and came to nothing."

"That man is John Dorison—the son," said Cathcart, watching keenly the effect of his words.

The Captain was evidently astonished ; he said :

"But he gave the name of Dudley last night ?"

"That is the name he has been known by since he left the city eight years ago. He returned yesterday morning and revealed himself to one of his father's old friends—old man Nettleman."

"Yes" interrupted the Captain, "the man he talked with in the saloon."

"The same."

"But," said the Captain, loth to give up a possible clue, "how do you account for his extreme familiarity with the house in Bleecker Street, and his going to that particular house on the first night of his return ?"

"He was born there. Idle curiosity while out for fresh air took him to look at the house of his birth, since he was in the neighborhood."

"True," mused the Captain, "that was Dorison's house. I had forgotten it."

"Having given you this information concerning him, and standing ready to give you any more you may want, I ask you to take the shadow off."

"Why ?"

"I have undertaken to discover the mystery of that unfinished letter."

"You believe the son then, and not the father ?"

"I believe the son is innocent of what appear to be charges against him in a letter death prevented the father from finishing."

"It will be difficult to trace the matter after this lapse of time."

"It will."

"Our people do not agree with your view of the case."

"Possibly. Was anything ever found in the young man's life to give color to the charge?"

"No; that was the puzzler. But the charges were distinct and unequivocal. I will give you a copy of the report in the case."

"Thanks; that will be a help. But I want that shadow off. It will embarrass my work."

"I will call him off at once, if you will be responsible for your man's appearance when wanted."

"I will be. In the mean time treat my communication—that is, as to the man's identity—as confidential."

"It will be so treated. But you had better help us in this matter."

"No. You are competent enough."

"It is a case dark enough to stagger the most competent."

The bustle in the adjoining room indicated that the coroner and his jury had completed their investigation of the scene of the murder, and were departing. The two detectives left the room they had retired to, and the Captain accompanied Cathcart to the door. As they stood on the top step, the Captain said:

"Mr. Cathcart, I have a foreboding of failure in this affair. I wish I could persuade you to work with us."

The old detective looked down upon the throng for a moment or two, and replied:

"I may work on the case. Its very difficulties attract me. But I cannot work with any one. I have had assistants, obedient to my orders, never associates, whose views I was compelled to consider. It will be better for us to work apart. We can meet from time to time and compare notes. I cannot work any other way."

The Captain shook hands warmly with the old man, saying that so much was better than nothing. Cathcart descended the steps with his hands in his vest-pockets.

He sought the minister of the church attended by Mrs. Farish and her daughter, without delay. Presenting his request to see Mr. Carman upon an important matter, he was ushered into the parlor. Mr. Carman came to him promptly, and a single glance sufficed to show the old detective that the minister was much agitated.

"Sir," he said, "if your business can be delayed I would like it. I have but this moment learned that one of my parishioners has been foully murdered. It is my duty to at once visit the daughter, and offer her such consolation as I can."

"It is about that murder I have called," replied Cathcart. "Permit me to urge you to sit down. Indeed, permit me to urge you to prepare yourself against another shock."

The minister, impressed by the manner of the old detective, did as he was requested.

"Now that you are seated," continued Cathcart, "let me tell you that your visit can be of no use. There is no daughter to console."

"I do not understand you," wonderingly replied Mr. Carman.

"This is the shock you must brace up against. In another part of the city last night, the daughter was also murdered."

"Oh, my merciful Father?" cried the minister. "Who are you who brings such dreadful tidings?"

"I am a detective seeking the cause and the perpetrator of the double murder. The case is shrouded in darkness and no reason as yet appears for these deeds. But there was one, and in an inquiry into the lives and antecedents of these women we hope to discover it."

But the good old minister was more anxious to ask than to answer questions, and he poured forth a torrent of them. When his curiosity was satisfied the detective began.

"How long have you known these women?"

"Since I have been pastor of this church, now some twelve years. Both mother and daughter were enrolled members of the congregation when I came to it."

"Did you know anything of their surroundings?"

"No. I knew her as a widow, of a small property, amply sufficient for their modest life. They were much respected in the church."

"Did you learn anything of their antecedents?"

"Why, no; when I assumed charge, their places in the congregation were fixed, and I accepted them at the valuation placed upon them by the other members. They were unobtrusive people, reserved,

not seeking society, talking not at all of themselves. I made regular pastoral calls upon them. They took little part in the social side of the church, but were not remiss in their duties."

"Did they have any intimacies with any one in the church?"

"I can recall none that were noticeable."

"Did not the young lady mingle with the young people?"

"She did when I first came, but when she was about twenty, say six years ago, she abruptly withdrew herself."

"Can you recall anything within your knowledge which at any time seemed uncommon, or out of the way, mysterious, so to speak?" asked Cathcart.

The minister thought a few moments.

"Well, sir," he said at length. "I have often said to my wife that Mrs. Farish gave me the impression of a woman with a history. To me, though others laughed at the idea, there was a suggestion of sadness under what was normally a bright, cheerful disposition. I do not know if I make myself plain. Under a sweet, equable temper, there was to me signs of a latent grief, settled to be sure, but the cause of constant sorrow. Shortly after I came here, I remarked this to her. She did not seem well pleased, but answered that in her young days she had passed through a period of deep sorrow, and she supposed it had left its impressions upon her. On another occasion when Mrs. Farish was calling at the parsonage, my wife,

referring to a case just then occupying a great deal of space in the public press, bore down heavily on the woman involved, when Mrs. Farish, much agitated and evincing an impatience foreign to her, cried out to my wife to be merciful. 'There are lives,' she said, 'that God alone can see the innocence of, but which a censorious world would pronounce evil?' Then she added these singular words, addressing my wife: ''Judge not, lest ye be judged.' Your condemnation of this poor woman rings in my ears as a condemnation of myself.' My wife and I often talked of this incident, but could make nothing of it. Again, eight years ago, I called at her house and found her in great distress, and though I endeavored to console her, she would say nothing as to its cause. At that time she put on mourning, which she wore ever after, and it was at that time that the daughter withdrew from association with the young people. This is all I can recollect, I think.—Stop, there is one more incident, trivial perhaps, but I will tell it. One day about three years ago I had been from home in attendance upon a funeral, and returning was told that Mrs. Farish had been awaiting me in the study a long time. Going to her I found her in great trouble. She said, however, that though she had come for advice upon a matter giving her great pain, she had reflected while waiting and had reached the conclusion that it were better for all concerned to say nothing; that she would bear this new trouble as she had borne other troubles all her life, alone; and she went away."

The old detective had listened most intently, never interposing a word, gesture, or expression, though his keen bright eyes gave heed to everything.

"Of what did her family consist all these years?" he asked.

"Herself and daughter. I once heard her refer to the boyhood of a son. But from her speech I presumed he had died young."

Cathcart asked and received the names and addresses of some of the older members of the church, whom he next sought in inquiry. He learned little from them, for they could give him even less than Mr. Carman. Two points, however, he obtained in addition. One old lady recollected that when Mrs. Farish first came among them she had a son, but that he disappeared when about eighteen—her understanding being that he had gone to the care of a relative in another city. The daughter of another old member contributed the fact that during the past three years, she had seen Anne Farish walking, on three diffierent occasions, in Union Square with a young man—the same young man. She had noted and remembered it, since it was the only time Anne had been know to be in the society of one of the other sex, and also from the fact that she seemed to be greatly troubled on each occasion, and further that the young man was most fashionably clad and had the air of being fast.

The day was well spent when Cathcart finished these inquiries, and he now recollected he had neither lunched nor dined. He hurried to the Grand Central Hotel.

CHAPTER VI.

WEAVING A THEORY.

DORISON was wandering about the office of his hotel in an aimless manner, inexpressibly bored by his compulsory inaction. When he saw Cathcart, his face lighted up, and he greeted the old man effusively.

"How long am I to remain a prisoner here," he asked.

"No longer," replied Cathcart. "The shadow has been removed and you are free to come and go at your will. Come and dine with me. I want to talk over the events of the day with you."

As much pleased as if he had been released from actual imprisonment, Dorison accompanied the old detective to a quiet restaurant in University Place, where they could secure themselves against interruption. While they dined Carthcart detailed to the young man the occurrences of the day. Intensely interested, and shocked as he was over the second murder, Dorison could not but wonder at the cool matter-of-fact manner in which Cathcart recited the event of the death of Mrs. Farish. He evinced neither agitation nor unusual interest, evidently treating it in his mind as incidental to the search he had set out upon. The impression produced

upon Dorison was not an agreeable one, for the old man was apparently so heartless and indifferent, showing neither horror over the deed nor consciousness of its enormity. They seemed only to be puzzles which he must work out. The while, however, Dorison admired the power of lucid statement possessed by the old man. The recital consumed the time of the dinner. When the coffee and cigars were brought, Cathcart said:

"Now I want to reason and reason aloud. If you discover a flaw in my argument put your finger upon it at once, else do not interrupt me. Now to begin: A woman named Farish, who has a daughter, living in Sixteenth Street for twenty years in the same house, which she owns, having no occupation and subsisting on her money, suddenly changes her mode of life, and, under the assumed name of Madame Delamour, rents the parlor floor of a house in Bleecker Street and opens a costumer's business.

"*Inference:* A change has taken place in her financial affairs, necessitating the earning of an income after twenty years of comparative independence.

"The business is opened one day, and on the night of the next day the daughter is found dead, stabbed in the neck in such a manner as to sever the carotid artery. On the same night, in her own house in Sixteenth Street, Mrs. Farish *alias* Madame Delamour, is found dead, under the similar circumstances—stabbed in such a manner as to sever the carotid artery.

"*Inference:* The two murders were committed by the same hand; the methods of taking life are the same; the murdered women bore the relation of mother and daughter. To suppose that these two, bearing to each other the relation they did, were killed by different persons for different reasons, is to admit the existence of a coincidence without parallel in the history of crime.

"*Inference second:* The murder was committed by a man who has some knowledge of anatomy and some surgical skill, as is argued by the precision with which these arteries were found and cut.

"A young man, whose attention is attracted to the possibility of wrong-doing in the Bleecker Street house, forces his way into the room occupied as a costumer's place, and finds in the fingers of the murdered girl a torn scrap of paper, and on the floor near by another torn scrap, both covered by writing in the same hand, the scraps suggesting that they were torn from letters wrested from the hands of the girl. The police discovered that the dress of Mrs. Farish is violently torn in the breast with all the appearance of something having been dragged from it. Valuables and money on the person are not taken.

"*Inference:* The murderer desired to possess himself of certain documents or papers held by the murdered woman; hence the motive of the crime.

"This young man also discovers the portrait and ring of Reuben Dorison in the room, and determines the writing on the torn scraps of paper to be in the hand of Reuben Dorison.

"*Inference:* In some way Reuben Dorison, dead eight years, was connected with the woman Farish and her daughter. Query, how? Not at present clear or ascertainable.

"Inquiry elicits these facts: The two women live quiet, regular and proper lives; are constant in attendance upon church and their duties; they have no intimate friends, few callers, and no social relations; at stated intervals, a young man, tall, slim, with brown hair, whose visits leave the mother sad and the daughter in tears, calls upon them; by her own admission the mother in her younger days has passed through a period of great sorrow, sorrow so great as to influence her after life; on two occasions she is known to be in deep distress—once eight years ago, when she refused to explain the cause, but immediately dresses in mourning, and the daughter withdraws from all association with young people; the other three years ago, when seeking her minister for advice, the mother thinks better of it and says she will meet this trouble as she has met her other troubles, alone. Reuben Dorison died eight years ago, coincidental with the appearance of Mrs. Farish in mourning. Inquiry also elicits that when the minister's wife is, in the presence of Mrs. Farish, condemning a woman for irregularity of life, Mrs. Farish cries out in protest, saying that the condemnation of the woman rings in her ears as a condemnation of herself.

"*Inference:* There was something—a fault, a misfortune, or a crime in the life of the mother,

with which the caller at stated intervals, and presumably Reuben Dorison, is connected.

"Inquiry also elicits the fact that the daughter, who has no association with young people, is seen on three different occasions walking in Union Square, evidently greatly troubled, with a young man, tall and slim, of fast appearance, dressed in extreme fashion.

"*Inference:* The caller at stated intervals and the walker in Union Square are one and the same.

"Near the body of the mother was found a man's glove, the form of which shows it was worn by a man with a large hand, prominent knuckles and joints, whose thumb was disproportionately long. This glove was cut and made to fit only the hand that wore it, an indication that the wearer was a man exceedingly particular as to his personal appearance and nice as to his apparel.

"*Inference:* First, as the walker in Union Square was noticeable because of his fine dress, and as the wearer of the glove was, as it indicates, careful as to his appearance, the wearer of the glove, the walker in Union Square, and the caller at stated intervals were one and the same. Second, as the glove was found close to the body of the mother after her death, and as one caller on the family was the incident of a month, this wearer of the glove was the murderer of the mother. Third, if of the mother, then of the daughter.

"One more point: Inasmuch as after the two women engaged in the costuming business it was

the habit of the mother to return home before the daughter, and the daughter to return at six, and as the servant left Mrs. Farish alone at eight, there is reason to believe that the daughter was murdered first and the mother after.

"Now, as to a theory: Mrs. Farish had been connected with some event, the secret of which she jealously guarded, in her early life, which was criminal. She had documents relating to this event, possession of which she shared with her daughter. These documents either implicated a young man who called upon her at stated intervals, or which, being in his hands, would prove of such value, that to possess them he could bring himself to commit murder. With these events Reuben Dorison is associated, since the only glimpse of any part of them we have obtained, shows his handwriting. The young man for years persecuted the two women to obtain the papers, being always refused and placated with gifts of money to such an extent, that in time the independence of Mrs. Farish was so impaired that she was compelled to resume a business she had many years before been engaged in. He had become desperate in finding that he could neither obtain the documents nor any more money, the latter fact being made clear to him when he learns that Mrs. Farish has gone into business. Believing these documents to be in the possession of the young woman, he visited the Bleecker Street apartment, and finding no other way to obtain them, murders her and

seizes them. He finds, however, that he has not all, and he goes to the Sixteenth Street house to see the mother. He demands and is refused them. He takes them by force, and he now knows that Mrs. Farish will unerringly attribute the murder of the daughter to him, and as a matter of self-preservation, he kills the mother.

"We have the motive for the deed. The criminal is a tall, slim man, with brown hair, who dresses in extreme fashion, who is dissipated, and who can be recognized by a large hand, with prominent joints and knuckles, and whose thumb is so disproportionately large and long as to be almost a deformity. He is a surgeon or has studied surgery. To find that man is to find the murderer, and, in my judgment, is to find the secret of that unfinished letter of your father's."

The old detective looked into the face of Dorison for the first time since he had begun to reason. Upon it was expressed excitement and admiration. Dorison's eyes burned brightly, his lips were parted, high color was in his cheeks, and he breathed heavily. Something of the fever of the chase was upon him.

"It is wonderful! It is wonderful!" he breathed out, rather than articulated. "It is profound, subtle reasoning, and all from such meagre and insufficient facts. It is reasoned out to a conclusion."

"No," said the old detective, "it is only the first theory, and may be utterly overturned by the first real, substantial fact hit upon."

"I cannot believe it," protested Dorison. "Your conclusions are too strong."

"But my premises may be weak," persisted Cathcart. "Don't lean too heavily upon a theory. The value of one is only that it gives you a basis from which to work. The danger of a theory is that you will cling to it, refusing in its interest to recognize the plain facts under your nose. The difference between a shrewd detective and a dull one is this: the latter becomes a slave to his theory and it controls him; the former treats it with suspicion and abandons it whenever facts justify such abandonment. But even working on the lines of an erroneous theory, you are more apt to hit upon the true facts that when you are working wild without plan or purpose. There is always some truth in every theory. The trouble with this theory of mine is that it is too natural and plausible. I always distrust that which seems natural in the beginning of a dark case."

Dorison was plainly disappointed and puzzled at the manner in which the old detective treated his own theory. He did not speak for some moments, and then he suddenly ejaculated:

"If I had so little confidence in a theory that I had spent so much pain and labor in building up, I would not work on it."

"Yes," calmly replied the old detective. "That is just what an inexperienced man like you would do. But that is what neither you nor myself will.

We will go to work on it, and your work will begin very soon."

Dorison looked up interested.

"My plans," continued Cathcart, "have been materially changed by the events of to-day, especially as to your work. It is my belief that the owner of that glove is to be found in the places frequented by young men of fashion. And it is in those places I want you to look for him."

"That I presume I can do without especial shrewdness?"

"I do not intend to give you my reasons for the plans I have formed. Reasons I always keep to myself. But, for reasons of my own, I want you to be informed upon the ways of the young men of the day and the young men themselves. To do this you must know them, associate with them, and to a certain extent be one of them. Hence, I want to set you on foot as soon as possible as a young man of fashion about town. Your business you are to keep closely to yourself; never lisping it to any one, and you will not be required to do any work which will betray it. You have been a young man of fashion once; you can easily resume the *rôle*."

"I have no desire to do so now," replied Dorison, by no means pleased with the line marked out for him.

"That may be, and is so, doubtless. But it is necessary. I will smooth your way for you. You shall have ostensible employment in a reputable house; you shall have the necessary credit at a

fashionable tailor, and you shall have the introduction to young men of fashion that will give you a start."

"But when all this is done, what am I to do?"

"Continuously extend the circle of your acquaintance and become familiar with fashionable haunts of all kinds, and obtain invitations, if possible, to visit people's homes. In the mean time watch people's hands. In short, so that you may not think you are upon a fool's errand, I will tell you that I want you to be eyes and ears for me in places where I cannot go myself without arousing suspicion."

"You think the murderer will be detected in such circles."

"If not detected, facts and circumstances will be secured that will lead up to detection. I am digging deeply, for if my experience is worth anything we will not come to the end of this matter to-morrow nor for many days thereafter. You must change your quarters to-morrow. Look out for them—a place where a moderately fashionable man should live."

With these words the old detective arose and, taking his hat, led the way to the door of the restaurant, where he said:

"Go where you will to-night. I will see you early in the morning."

They parted with this.

CHAPTER VII.

SETTING UP A MAN OF FASHION.

WITHIN a week after his conversation Dorison was in occupation of a comfortable suite of apartments in Twenty-ninth Street.

Through the agency of old Mr. Nettleman he had gathered a stock of such fashionable clothing as he had not had since the days prior to his father's death; he was in enjoyment of an income over and above his salary of two hundred dollars a month with which to support his pretensions, supplied by Mr. Nettleman. Also he was connected nominally with a mercantile house in the lower part of the city, and this also through Mr. Nettleman, who had taken a friend into his confidence, and given Dorison thereby a standing other than that of a mere idler of the town. And in addition he had brought the young man into pleasant relations with several young men, sons of his friends.

All of this was in pursuance of the suggestions of Cathcart, and though he did not inform Dorison as to his reasons, he did his cousin. The reasons were not so much that Dorison could aid in the capture of the murderer as that he saw that any explanation of Reuben Dorison's strange letter was to be obtained in the circle in which he had moved.

And he hoped to edge the younger Dorison into it, without his identity being known.

Cathcart had a theory as to Reuben Dorison's connection with the Farish's which he kept closely to himself. In what direction it tended may be imagined from this brief exchange with his cousin Nettleman one evening when they were together.

"What was Reuben Dorison's private life, Cousin Nettleman?" he asked suddenly. "Was he given to intrigues with women?"

Mr. Nettleman was indignant and in arms at once.

"No, sir," he replied emphatically. "No purer man in his private life ever lived. Of that I am certain. His home life was perfectly happy."

"Are you saying that because you think you must be loyal to the memory of your dead friend, or because you believe it?"

"I say it because it is true. From the moment he married his wife, he was a devoted husband and a pure man."

"His wife died how many years ago?"

"She died the first year he moved into Twenty-third Street—in 1851."

"Ah, twenty-eight years ago."

Whatever he thought, he was exceedingly busy in these days, leaving Dorison much to himself. About two weeks after the young man had entered upon his second career as a man of fashion, as Cathcart called it, the old detective made his appearance at Dorison's rooms. It was early in the

morning, before the young man was out of bed. He pushed himself into the sleeping-room and sat himself upon the bed as he talked.

"I have found out who transferred by deed that house in Sixteenth Street to Mrs. Farish," he said without preface. "After a search which carried me to Buffalo, I found that the man had been dead a year. I have made diligent search for Mr. Farish, and have not found a person who ever heard of him. I have, however, picked up a great many trifles which will in time, no doubt, be of value. I have been hoping to find a starting place for you."

"I thought you had abandoned me to my fate as a fashionable rounder," said the young man lightly.

"No," replied Cathcart seriously. "But I want you to make a systematic study of hands."

"Of what," said Dorison, perplexed by the seeming irrelevancy of the remark.

"A study of the hands of the young men of your acquaintance. You must, as I have indicated before, look high and low for such a hand as I have described to you."

"And finding such a hand arrest the body to which it is attached, I suppose?"

"No; inform me. Find his name, occupation, and surroundings."

"Ah, an easy matter surely when you've caught your bird."

"Here," continued the detective, taking out a well-filled wallet and extracting a paper from it,

"is a complete list of all places where they make gloves to order. You must visit each place and order gloves for yourself, and while doing so get up a talk on the peculiarity of hands that glove-makers meet with, and perhaps you may stumble upon the maker of the glove I have told you about."

"That ought to be easy."

"Now, don't go too fast," said Cathcart warningly. "It is by no means as easy as you think—that is, to do it without arousing suspicion. People do not like detectives except in books, and if you give them reason to suspect you to be one, you will find the bars up against you. Again, you are liable to direct the attention of the police to yourself, and I particularly desire to avoid that. Now one word more, and I am off. I want you to meet me at Police Headquarters at eleven precisely this morning. Not before that hour, because I don't want those fellows to get at you as they will be sure to do; not after that hour, for I don't want to wait a moment."

With this he was gone. Dorison consulted his watch and found he would have barely time to dress and breakfast. So he hurried into his bath.

At eleven, as he turned into Mulberry Street from Bleecker, he saw Cathcart approaching from Houston. They met at the foot of the steps of the Police Headquarters.

"One moment before we enter," said Cathcart. "Answer no leading question except by evasion. I want you here to make a study of that glove. If

you have the slightest aptitude for this business, from a close examination of the glove, you can gain an intelligent knowledge of the character of the hand you are to seek. And let me tell you there is as much character in a hand as in a face. Impress it on your memory, burn it in, and when you have fastened it on your mind, turn to me and say, 'No, I never saw this glove. I do not recognize it.' Do you understand?"

Assuring the old man he did, Dorison followed him into the building and into the office of the detective we have twice met before in the course of our narrative. The detective himself was seated in his office chair, his feet stretched out, his hands in his pockets, his chin on his breast, and his face wearing a gloomy, perplexed expression.

As he perceived his visitor, he brightened up and rose to greet Cathcart.

"Ah," he said, "I am glad you have come. I was this moment desiring to see you. Have you anything new?"

"I have something to say to you," replied Cathcart gravely. "But first I want my friend Dudley to see that glove we found."

The detective, who had not greeted Dorison, though he had recognized him, now addressed a salutation to him, and bending over his desk moved a newspaper revealing the glove under a glass, still on the little fan on which it had been placed. Cathcart took it, and, moving the glass, handed it to Dorison, who carried it to the light. He expended five min-

utes in its examination. Turning, he handed it back to Cathcart with the words the old detective had bade him utter.

"Another disappointment," quietly remarked the old man as he turned to go. He was detained by the Captain.

"I thought you had something to say to me," he said.

"Yes," replied Cathcart. "Excuse me, Mr. Dudley."

Taking this as an intimation to remove himself as far as possible, Dorison took a seat near the door. Cathcart and the Captain talked in whispers.

"What is it," asked the Captain. "What did you bring him here for?"

"A bare chance," replied Cathcart; "he talked to me of a man with a long thumb, and I brought him here to see if he could recognize it. He does not know the meaning of his visit."

The Captain closely examined the face of Cathcart as he was thus glibly lying, but it was inscrutable.

"Now what have you to tell me?" asked the Captain.

"Only as to what I have been at work on. Nothing as to what I have found, for it is nothing. From her minister I have found there was some strange or wrong event in Mrs. Farish's life, but what, I cannot even guess at. I have found out who deeded the house to her only to find him dead. In short, I have been looking into her antecedents without

result. No one knows where she came from, or what she was prior to turning up in Sixteenth Street twenty years ago."

"Your experience is not unlike my own. You are discouraged then?"

"No; if I were at the beginning of my career, say thirty-five years ago, I should throw up my hands. As it is, I feel as the real search had only begun."

"Oh," said the Captain, with his peculiar smile. "What is your plan?"

"To tramp around until I knock against something that will give me a suggestion."

"Well," said the Captain, after a moment's hesitation, "here is one thing. Mrs. Farish had a son, who was wild and unmanageable, and left home when he was eighteen to go into the West. He gave his mother much trouble."

"Ah, where did you get that?"

"By accident. An old carpenter, who used to do odd jobs for Mrs. Farish, blew in here a day or two after the murder with that single bit of information."

"Name and address," demanded Cathcart, pulling out his memorandum book. The Captain gave it, and it was duly entered.

"It is not much," said Cathcart, as he put up his book. "I had heard of the son, but the minister believed him dead, from the way his mother had referred to him. What else have you heard?"

"Nothing," returned the Captain; "I have been

traveling over the same ground you have, and with a like result. But as a matter of fact I have not been able to devote my whole time to the case. A series of most skillful burglaries have been going on for some time, and we are unable to get trace of them. The Commissioners are making my life miserable, and I am nearly wild over it. They are skillful and audacious. They are hands new to New York. The methods they employ show that they are not the old cracksmen: And the old fellows do not know them any better than we do. I have half the thieves in town looking for them from curiosity."

"Ah," said Cathcart, much interested. "What are the peculiarities of their work?"

"There is no picking of locks; no lifting of windows; all entrances are made through front doors to which they have keys; intimate acquaintance with the location of valuables and of the interior of the houses. They take money, jewelry, and small plate if it is silver, and nothing else. In three instances they have passed over negotiable securities, refusing to take them."

"Accomplices from the inside?"

"That was my first thought. But I have abandoned it. Here are two strange things. They scatter their work. Night before last they entered a house in Sixty-third Street near Madison Avenue. Last night in Fifteenth Street near Sixth Avenue. And so it goes. Every house they enter has a sick person in it; it never fails."

"Ah, ha!" said Cathcart, "There is your point. Follow that up. Those things don't happen. Confine yourself to that point."

"I wish you would work with us in that murder affair."

"I will give you assistance. Devote yourself to these robberies. I will follow the murder up until I know something. You cannot divide yourself on two such important cases and succeed in either. If you want reports from me every morning I will give you something you can show as indicating your progress. Trust me."

The Captain wrung Cathcart's hand.

"That was the very proposition I was going to make. You have removed half the load from my shoulders. If you want men send to me for them. I leave the case to you."

"Discreet and skillful shadows will be all I want."

"Send for them then any hour of the day or night."

They parted at the door.

Dorison followed the old detective into the street, when he said:

"You have those torn scraps of paper safe."

"Yes," replied Dorison.

"Hold fast to them. Put them in a safe place. The time may come when they will be of the utmost value."

On the corner of Broadway and Bleecker Street, Cathcart halted and said:

"My visit has turned out better than I could have

expected. The Captain has given the case into my hands. Now I've got it. It is a question of time only. No interference now by blunderers. I know the man and how to catch him with proof."

"You know the man?" said Dorison surprised.

"Yes, I know the man. That is to say—"

The old detective stopped suddenly and attentively regarded a man passing on the other side of the street. Without a word he slipped across, leaving Dorison so astounded, he could do nothing but stare after him as he nimbly followed the man who had attracted his attention.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN ADVENTURE.

"I HAVE seen politer gentlemen," remarked Dorison to himself, when he recovered from his astonishment. He stood for a moment upon the corner. "Well," he muttered, "he has given me instructions as to one piece of work, and I will go at it at once."

He took from his pocket the list of glove-makers given him by Cathcart. Discovering that one was not far away, he determined to begin there. As he walked up the street, he busied himself with preparing a few tactical questions which should lead to a general discussion of glove-making, out of which might come some hints as to the wearer of the glove he had recently examined.

Reaching Eighth Street he crossed to the other side of Broadway, on which the glove-maker was, but his steps were checked by an omnibus which stopped immediately in his way to permit a young girl to descend—a young girl perhaps of nineteen summers, whose bright, pretty face, surmounted by a wreath of golden curls, attracted his admiring attention. She turned to the sidewalk, to which he was crossing, without seeing a pair of horses rapidly driven down the street.

Before Dorison could sound a warning the girl was knocked down by one of the horses, and but for a mighty leap upon his part, which enabled him to reach her in time to drag her from under the wheels nearly upon her, she would have been run over. He lifted her to her feet quickly. Perceiving she was either injured or fainting from fright, he bore her in his arms to the sidewalk, a policeman, who had run to the girl's assistance, stopping the vehicles to make way for him.

As he reached the curbstone with his burden, a young man stepped up to him and with no little insolence said:

"I'll relieve you of your charge," attempting at the same time to take the girl.

Dorison, from a rapid survey of the young man, was not impressed favorably, and said curtly:

"I do not recognize your right."

'Then I'll make you," angrily returned the young man. "This lady I know; I am her friend."

"Stand back now," said the policeman, "your right will be recognized when the lady can tell who her friends are."

To Dorison: "Is she hurt? Carry her to that drug store," pointing to one near by.

At this moment the occupant of the carriage came hurrying up.

"Is she injured?" he asked. "Bring her to this drug store. I am a physician."

"By ——! Fassett," cried the young man who had interfered, with an oath, and who was following,

"you manufacture your patients. You ought to have your neck broken for driving like that."

"Be quiet, Harry, for Heaven's sake!" implored the physician.

During this brief interchange Dorison, accompanied by the policeman, who was assisting in bearing the young lady, had reached the drug store and placed her in a chair.

The other two followed, and the physician, bending over the girl, said:

"It is a faint."

Calling for remedies, he soon restored the young lady to consciousness.

Opening her eyes she looked about in a dazed manner for a moment, as if she could not collect her senses.

"Where am I?" she asked, bewildered. "What has happened?" Recognizing the physician she said, "Oh, is it you, Doctor? How came I here?"

"Are you injured, Miss Eustace? Tell me. It was I who knocked you down."

"Yes," bitterly laughed the young man, "with his fine, fast span, he knocked you down."

The girl looked up, and Dorison was certain he caught an expression of dislike and contempt, as it flitted over her face during the moment her eyes rested upon the speaker. For the first time Dorison seriously regarded the young man, and observed that his face bore the unmistakable evidence of rapidity of life, and that he was no stranger to the brandy bottle. Yet the face would have been called

handsome by most people; the flush attributed by Dorison to alcohol, by many would have been taken as an evidence of youth and health; and his air and manner called dashing and engaging. His fine clothes were extreme in cut and loud in colors. The sum of Dorison's rapid conclusions was that the man was a low-bred "cad."

The physician repeated his question.

"No," replied the young girl. "I am not hurt. But what does it all mean?"

The policeman replied to her question :

"It means that after you got out of the Fifth Avenue stage opposite here, you were knocked down by a team, and you'd 'a' bin run over but for the spryness of this gentleman," indicating Dorison with a nod, "who leaped forward, pulled you from under the wheels, and brought you to the sidewalk."

The girl lifted her violet eyes to Dorison, with a most grateful expression, and blushing as she spoke, said simply :

"I thank you, sir."

"I thank my good fortune I was so near as to be of service," replied Dorison, a little embarrassed under such grateful eyes.

"None but the brave—" sneered the young man.

"Be quiet," said the policeman, so savagely the utterer of the sneer found it convenient to walk away a short distance. The physician began to question her as to possible injuries.

To all inquiries the young lady made such

replies as indicated no serious damage had been done, although she was evidently much shocked.

"I do not think the young lady has sustained any injuries beyond a few bruises," said Dorison. "She was struck by the shoulder of the horse nearest her. I am certain nothing else touched her, not even a horse's hoof."

"Then," said the physician, "I am thankful to be able to say that a slight stimulant is all that will be required to enable her to return home."

This was administered, and the dirt and dust having been brushed from her clothes, the physician said :

"I hope, Miss Eustace, you will permit me to make a slight reparation for my blundering carelessness, by driving you home? My excuse for rapid driving is that I was hastily summoned to a very sick man."

"Then do not let me detain you another moment, Doctor," hastily replied the young lady. "I am wholly recovered, and I think I was silly to faint."

"I will accompany Miss Eustace home," said the young man, perceiving an opportunity and striving to utilize it.

"No, sir, it is unnecessary," replied the lady, with such coldness and haughtiness as to make a repetition of the proffer impossible. To the officer she said, "Will you do me the favor to call a cab." To the physician, "Doctor, you must go to your patient. I insist upon it. I will forgive you for knocking me down, if you will go at once, and

I never will if you don't. Go. I am not injured at all."

The doctor departed with apologies, as the officer entered, having caught a cab at the door.

The young lady, rising, turned to Dorison and with color again flushing her cheeks said :

"Sir, if I have not expressed gratitude to you for your service, it is not because I am insensible of its value. Indeed, I thank you very much."

With this, to which Dorison responded with a low bow, she walked off with the officer, who returned a moment later saying :

"The young lady desires to know your name and address, so that her father may call upon you."

Dorison had regained his self-possession fully, and he replied :

"Say to the young lady, with my compliments, please, that while I shall esteem it as an honor to be visited by her father, his thanks are unnecessary, since I am grateful for having been able to render service to his daughter. My name is James Dudley; my address is No. — Twenty-ninth Street."

It is doubtful whether the officer repeated any more of this rather grandiloquent speech than the address. Dorison, turning, saw the young stranger regarding him with an insolent sneer. It made him angry and all the more so because he was conscious that his speech, a little too pompous to be in good taste, had given reason for the sneer.

So he rushed forthwith into another error.

"My name is James Dudley. What is yours?"

"Really," said the young man, with studied insolence, "your information is highly important, but I am not bartering on such terms."

An angry reply leaped to Dorison's tongue, but perceiving the absurdity of a quarrel upon such insufficient grounds, he walked out of the store.

It was some time before he cooled, for he felt he had made himself ridiculous. Indeed it was not until he recognized the humor of the situation—that he desired to punish the young man for having himself been absurd, that he could laugh it off. By this time he found he had passed the store he wished to call at, and retraced his steps. Although he endeavored to bend his mind to the business he had in hand, he was not able to banish that charming face, especially those upturned eyes. Perhaps his failure to elicit any information, and he visited the whole list, was due to that haunting face and to the memory of the pressure of that soft, yielding form in his arms as he bore it to the sidewalk.

Tired out at the end, disgusted with his failure, and blaming himself for having done his work badly, he returned to his apartments to prepare himself for his evening's work. His thoughts turned to the purpose Cathcart had in view in sending him into the life he was leading. And while he acknowledged to himself that he had fallen into old ways and habits with astonishing ease, and that his life was far from disagreeable, yet he doubted the wisdom of Cathcart and could not put away the idea that he was merely the puppet of the whims and

caprices of a man who had entered upon his dotage. Consequently, he could not believe that he could continue long on his present course. These thoughts, not unmixed with occasional reversions to the adventures of the day, occupied him as he dressed for the evening. Indeed, he had barely completed his dressing when a card was presented bearing the words: "Herbert Clavering Eustace."

As he directed his caller to be shown up, he was conscious of a feeling of elation, reason for which he could not satisfactorily give to himself. However, little time was given for self-examination, for in a moment Mr. Eustace was ushered into the room.

His caller was a tall, slim gentleman, whose sixty winters bore lightly upon him; a gentleman of elegant and courtly bearing; whose head was covered with snow-white hair, while a mustache as white swept across his face and lost itself in soft, silken white whiskers. With perfect breeding he stated the purpose of his call to be wholly that of thanking Mr. Dudley for the inestimable service rendered his daughter; and not only, he said, did he convey the thanks of the other members of the family, but of the young lady herself, who, she was quite certain, at the time of the accident had not shown proper appreciation of what she had been saved from by Mr. Dudley's quick wit and ready hand.

All of this overwhelmed Dorison, who was really a modest fellow, and he felt that shamefacedness at being so much thanked, manly men ever do. By a strong effort he pulled his wits together and met

the courtesy in a well-bred manner, avoiding the error of treating a service the beneficiaries regarded important, as trivial, as ill-bred people are so apt to do. This in turn impressed Mr. Eustace. They glided into a general chat of a few moments, when the caller arose and again renewing his distinguished considerations, expressed the hope the day was not far distant when the young lady might thank him in person, but in such general terms and in such tone that Dorison instantly felt that he would be a consummate fool if he were to take the expression to be anything more than a polite courtesy.

He accompanied Mr. Eustace to the door, and in doing so passed into another light, giving Mr. Eustace for the first time a fair opportunity to observe his face.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the old gentleman, startled out of his propriety, "What a marvelous resemblance. Sir, are you related in any way to Reuben Dorison?"

Too well disciplined in this direction to be taken aback, Dorison replied:

"The gentleman is unknown to me."

"He is dead these eight years. He was a dear friend of mine. Your resemblance to him at the age you are now, is something wonderful. Indeed, intervening years pass away, and as I talk with you I seem to talk with him. You have his voice, his bearing, his very tricks of manner, even your smile is his. Upon my word it is wonderful."

It required all the self-control Dorison could sum-

mon to prevent a betrayal of himself in this outburst. Murmuring something about strong resemblances being not uncommon in this world, he bowed his visitor out.

The door closed, and he threw himself into the first chair; he wildly cursed the fate that compelled him to deny his birth, his identity, his claim to the consideration of his father's friends, and to mislead and prevaricate to a fine, honorable gentleman, as he was certain Mr. Eustace was—the father of his daughter. The bitterness of his destiny came upon him with even greater force, and he passed an hour in passionate revolt against the fortune that had been meted out to him. Out of this futile rebelling, he passed into a frenzy of determination to wrest the secret of his disgrace from unwilling time, and went out into the air.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MAN WITH A THUMB.

WHEN Dorison rushed out, under the impulse of his determination, he felt strong enough to wrestle with worlds. When he reached the street and considered what he should do he felt his weakness. As suddenly as he had burst into his spasm of passionate remonstrance, as suddenly he relapsed into hopelessness. Lost in gloomy thought he wandered on, caring little whither he went. He reached Third Avenue without knowing why he had walked in that direction.

Near the corner, an elderly man, with long hair and beard, had erected a frail, low platform which he had lit with oil lamps. He was an itinerant phrenologist, and was holding forth in long words and execrable grammar upon the marvelous head of a street gamin he had persuaded to submit to examination. Over his head was a placard, "A man is what he makes himself."

Dorison did not ask what pertinency the aphorism might have to the old man's occupation, but applying it to himself, laughed bitterly, and asked aloud, "Is that so? What am I but the foot-ball of chance—a chip on the rushing waters of life, I can neither resist nor control."

He stopped idly to listen to the street fakir as he gulled his auditors, standing on the outer edge of the circle in a shadow. Tiring of listening, he turned to go, when his attention was attracted by a figure which seemed familiar. A glance sufficed to show that it was the young man he had encountered at the time of the accident to Miss Eustace, who was so insolent. Perceiving that he was not observed by the young man, he determined to remain where he was, rather than encounter for a second time the one who had filled him with such repugnance.

The young man, dressed as he was in the afternoon, lounged under the shadow of a covered entrance to the rear of the corner saloon. As Dorison watched him, a man, sharp-eyed and alert in his bearing, taking note of everything about him, passed by. Dorison heard a low, shrill whistle and thought he discovered an exchange of signals between the new comer and the lounger, but so rapid and insignificant were they, that perceiving no change in the attitude of the young man, and seeing the other one pass on, he concluded he was mistaken. A moment later the sharp-eyed man returned, passing close to the lounger in the shadow, and this time Dorison saw plainly that a folded paper was transferred from the lounger to the passer-by, who went on a little distance and then sauntered back. As he passed the lounger he said, without turning his head:

"When?"

"To-night," replied the lounger.

The sharp-eyed man joined the circle of those listening to the phrenologist, listened a moment, and then stepping back said:

"What hour?"

"Between twelve and one," came the answer from the lounger.

The alert man again joined the circle, and again listening a moment, stepped back and Dorison heard the further exchange:

"How many?"

"Three."

With this the alert young man walked off rapidly toward the corner and disappeared. The lounger emerged from his shadow and went off in the direction of Broadway.

"Mysterious," muttered Dorison. "Now, what can that mean? If I were Cathcart I presume I would construct the theory of a great crime or a huge conspiracy."

He came out of the dark corner. A young woman was coming down the street intent upon her own thoughts, humming a tune. As she came opposite the entrance to the saloon referred to, as the one under the shadow of the cover of which the antipathy of Dorison was lounging, the door was flung open and a loudly dressed man, partially intoxicated, came out.

Seeing the young woman he cried out:

"Hello, Bess, old gal."

"Go 'way," she replied, trying to evade him.

But he reached forward and, catching her by the

arm, tried roughly to pull her to him, as he said, with a taunting laugh:

"No, you don't, my bird. Come here and give me a kiss."

"Let me go," cried the girl, struggling to free herself. "Let me go, you big loafer, or I'll call the police."

"Or, Johnny the grip, eh! Oh, no, you don't go until you give me a kiss."

He bent over in an endeavor to carry out his threat, when she dealt him a smart blow upon his cheek with her open hand.

With an oath he made a motion as if to strike her, when a policeman, running from the corner, cried out:

"None of that, now."

Dorison, before whose eyes this scene had been enacted so rapidly that he could not interfere, supposed the cry of the policeman was addressed to the ruffian, but to his surprise he saw him seize the girl.

"I've been looking for this. Now I'll take you in."

"I've done nothing," said the girl in alarm. "He insulted me for no reason."

"Oh yes! Of course. That's likely," cried the officer, scornfully.

"Officer," interposed Dorison, "you will do an act of injustice if you arrest this young woman. I was a witness of the whole thing."

"Do you know this woman?"

"No, I don't, but I know she was not to blame in this matter."

"Well, I do," persisted the officer.

"Whether you do or not," replied Dorison, "you mustn't arrest her for anything she's done to-night. If you commit such an outrage I'll make trouble for you."

"Are you a 'pal' of her's?"

"I'm a 'pal' of nobody," said Dorison with dignity.

"Do you know what she is?" asked the officer, with a sneer.

"No, and I don't ask. But I do know she was passing along the street quietly when this ruffian came out of that door, and seizing her, tried to kiss her, an indignity she very properly resented. You must not arrest her; if you do I will make a complaint against you where it will trouble you. If you must arrest any one arrest the rascal who molested her."

Impressed by Dorison's stern manner, the officer looked for the offender denounced, and to the surprise of all he had disappeared.

"He's had some reason for sliding out," said the officer to himself.

Then turning to the girl he said:

"Your're in luck to-night in havin' this swell at your back. You look out though, I'm watchin' you."

The girl, who had not spoken a word during the passage between the officer and Dorison, now turned to the latter and said:

"I am obliged to you for your kindness, sir. You've got me out of a bad scrape, sir."

The policeman had gone back to the corner. The girl, watching him, laid her hand upon the arm of Dorison to detain him.

"I'm not what that man wants to make me out. I've got a man I am as much married to as if the priest had said the words. That man—the policeman—has been followin' me for a year, and he's got it in for me because I told him to go about his business. The other man's crooked—he's a thief, and my man knows he is. I won't forget your kindness. It isn't every swell as would interfere to help a woman like me."

She went off nodding and smiling.

"I'm in for adventures to-day," muttered Dorison, as he retraced his steps through Twenty-ninth Street to Broadway. "I wonder if destiny directed me this way to help that poor girl. Apparently I have an occupation in life—the rescuing of pretty young women. It does not promise to be remunerative, yet if thanks were coin, I would be rich to-night."

The incidents of the evening had stirred him from his gloomy thoughts, and his mind reverted to the espisode of the early afternoon, bringing the fair young face with violet eyes and clustering golden curls before him. In what direction his thoughts strayed may be judged from the remark he muttered aloud as he turned into Broadway.

"It was a sunbeam shot athwart a dark life, and as unattainable as the sun itself."

Arriving in front of Daly's Theater, upon a sudden impulse he turned in and bought a ticket. Though the curtain was up the play had not progressed far into the first act when he found himself comfortably seated.

Passionately fond of the drama, he was soon engrossed in the brightness of the dialogue and the skill of the sterling favorites, Rehan and Lewis.

Immediately in front of him sat a gentleman with whom he had a slight acquaintance. Beside this acquaintance, evidently his companion, sat a young man whose countenance he noted was the most attractive he had ever seen in a man. Somewhat plump and fair, good humor, intelligence and refinement reigned in it. He further noted, that the young man was endowed with a head of hair which should by right have been bestowed upon one of the other sex, for it was pure golden, fine, soft, silky and curly. From time to time, as interest in the play flagged, Dorison turned to look at that kindly, winsome face, remarking how artless and responsive it was without losing a particle of manliness.

"Yet," he commented, "such a face, I take it, would win more with men than with women."

By-and-bye the young man who had thus attracted his attention threw his arm over the back of the seat, permitting it to hang limply behind him.

Dorison started violently. He turned pale and a feeling of sickening faintness swept over him. Had not all faces been intent upon the stage, his marked

agitation must have attracted the attention of all about him. He trembled in every limb.

There was the hand he had been bidden to seek.

Not only was it the hand with prominent joints and knuckles, and with disproportionately long thumb, but it was encased by the mate of the very glove he had that morning examined.

It was the same in color, in quality, in form and in the peculiarity of its make. Like that one, it fitted in every part of the hand that wore it perfectly.

For a moment or two everything swam before his eyes. He seized the arms of his seat to prevent himself from falling. The sensation, as powerful as it was, passed away and he got himself under better control. He studied the hand and glove. There could be no mistake. The opportunity for close examination was ample before the young man withdrew his hand.

From this moment the drama on the stage lost interest for him. He now was concerned in a tragedy before whose dread events the puny happenings of the comedy paled into insignificance. He studied the face of the young man with new interest and from another point of view.

"It is the hand and the glove," he said to himself, "but it is difficult to believe that that face could have been concerned in such awful work."

Yet, while he expressed this thought, he did not falter in his belief that the murderer of Mrs. Farish and her daughter sat before him. For a brief moment he contemplated the wild idea of

denouncing the man there and then. This was due to the strength of Cathcart's theorizing. Though the old detective would have laughed at Dorison's certainty, he could not have failed to have been complimented by this sincere testimony to the power of his reasoning.

What Dorison did determine to do was to wait until the play was done and follow the young man with a view of discovering who he was. He grew so impatient for the curtain to fall, and so nervous over the slow progress the comedy made, that, unable to sit still longer, he left his seat and went into the rear of the theatre, from whence he could command a view of the house and not lose sight of his prey. After what seemed to him an interminable time the curtain fell, and the large audience slowly made its way out. As the two upon whom his eyes were fixed approached the spot where he stood, the companion of the man with a thumb recognized Dorison with a courteous bow and passed on. Dorison followed. At the outer door the twain stopped and conversed earnestly. And suddenly, before Dorison could anticipate the act, the man with the thumb flung a laughing negative to some persuasion of his friend, darted across the pavements, leaped into a waiting carriage and was rapidly driven away.

The other turned to watch the people pass out. Dorison stepped up, and saluting him, said:

"I have been strangely attracted by the face of your companion of the evening. I have

rarely seen one more winning. May I ask his name?"

The gentleman, who was one introduced to Dorison through the maneuvering of Nettleman, laughed as he replied:

"The common experience. Every one is attracted by it. I tell him that, like the traditional girl, he carries his fortune in his face. He is as good a fellow as it indicates. His name is—"

At that moment a gentleman with a lady on either arm addressed the speaker, and the sentence was stopped short of the information it was to convey. Lifting his hat to Dorison with request to be excused, he offered his arm to one of the ladies and walked away.

Dorison was disappointed, but he consoled himself with the thought that the information was not lost, only delayed, since he could soon find the gentleman who possessed it.

His first impulse was to seek Cathcart at once, but reflecting that the discovery of the young man, without further information, would carry nothing to so practical a person, he determined to delay his communication until he could gather the name of the owner of the thumb and something as to his surroundings.

Quite excited he strolled down the street and entered that great thoroughfare, the Hoffman House. Having made a tour of the corridors and the art gallery without finding any one he knew, he

turned to go out, when he saw the man with the thumb enter the door.

To his great surprise also, he saw the young man whom he had seen twice before that day under most dissimilar circumstances—the insolent young man—start up from a corner and address the other.

The man in whom he, Dorison, had so great an interest, returned a cold and unmistakably haughty bow, and passed on, while the other colored, frowned and returned to his corner.

The man with the thumb supplied himself with a cigar at the case, went out again, and leaping into his cab was driven off.

"Strange," muttered Dorison, "that that man should cross my path three times to-day, ending up with showing he knows the man I want to know so badly."

CHAPTER X.

BY WAYS UNKNOWN.

EARLY the next morning, even before he had breakfasted, Dorison sought the old detective at his room.

"Have you found your glove-maker?" asked Cathcart, as he entered.

"I have something much better," replied Dorison. "The man with the thumb."

"You are expeditious," said the old man, so coolly as to dampen the ardor of the younger one, who rather anticipated an outburst of surprise and excitement.

"It was purely by accident," he said.

"Well, tell me the story, and begin at the beginning."

Thus adjured, his enthusiasm repressed by the total lack of it in the other, Dorison began with his entrance into the theater, omitting no detail.

When he had finished, Cathcart shook his head dubiously.

"What is wrong?" anxiously queried Dorison. "Do you think I erred in permitting the young fellow to get away without learning his name?"

"No; that can be easily obtained. But I distrust the conclusions of your information."

Dorison was puzzled and said so.

"I mean this," said the old detective. "Not only did you find a hand which answers perfectly to the one I want, but you found an exact mate to the glove which you examined yesterday morning. You have found too much. If you had found the hand without the glove, or the glove without the hand, I would feel better satisfied. You have found so much at the first blush, which being established would almost justify immediate arrest, it shakes my confidence. I am afraid your imagination ran away with you."

"Not in this instance," said Dorison, highly displeased and disposed to resentment. "There could possibly be no mistake."

"My sensation is one of disappointment, and I give great heed to my sensations. Perhaps you may be entirely right. But let me present a consideration to you. You do not doubt that the man who lost the glove failed to discover his loss, do you?"

"No."

"Then having done so, recollecting where he removed it, and having committed the murders, don't you think he would be worried over the loss, and would fear that by it he had given a clue to a search for himself?"

"Very probably."

"Do you think a man so worried would don an identically similar pair and go into so conspicuous a place as a theater?"

"Well, what do you argue then?"

"Either that you have been grossly mistaken, or that the man with the thumb is not the man we want."

"You are discouraging."

"I do not mean to be so; we must be cautious in so important a matter as an arrest."

"You must see the man yourself then," replied Dorison, much nettled. "I can do no more than tell you I have found a man whose right hand corresponds precisely in every particular, even to the peculiar prominence of the second knuckle, to the hand you want, and who wears a glove precisely similar to the one I saw yesterday morning. Now," continued Dorison, growing more earnest, "when I examined that glove I paid less attention to the form of the hand it indicated, than to the make, kind and color of the glove—particularly the color. I accepted your description of the hand as true. On seeing it, I saw it was one of the kind a man of fashion would wear in the evening."

"Ah!" cried Cathcart, interested. "Follow up that point. Tell me what you mean?"

"The man who wore it was in full dress. Fashion's laws are inexorable. At present it prescribes just that kind of a glove for evening wear, just that color. Probably ten thousand men wore just such a glove last night in the cities of the East. Now, that young man, putting on full dress, would naturally draw on one of that kind. You said the man who wore the glove was a bit of a dandy. This man is."

"You have made a point," said the old man. "The man we want, besides having a big thumb and prominent joints, was tall and slim, with brown hair."

Dorison's face fell. He had forgotten this requirement. He hesitated to reply.

"Well," said Cathcart, "does your man answer to that?"

"No," replied Dorison sullenly. "He was short and plump, his hair was light—a golden color."

"Then he is either not the man we want, or we have come upon a variation in our theory. However," added Cathcart, "that is not to say your information is not important. Upon the contrary, it is highly so. You must follow him up; make his acquaintance, gain his regard, and if possible get on terms of intimacy with him. When you have found out his haunts I must get a look at him."

"You would do all this believing he is not our man," asked Dorison, with something of a sneer.

"I believe nothing," replied the old man testily, "but I disbelieve nothing. You jump at conclusions. It is a bad fault, especially in an inquiry like the one we are engaged in. You came here certain you had found the murderer. Now, upon the expression of a possible doubt, you are certain he is not. Yet you have shown me a flaw in my reasoning. I neither believe nor disbelieve at this stage of the game. I am open to conviction on all sides. This man with the thumb must be followed up. Obtain his name—all about him."

"I had two chances at him last night. I saw him afterward at the Hoffman."

"Indeed. Was he alone?"

"Yes, at the Hoffman. Though a man who had crossed my path twice before during the day accosted him."

"A friend?"

"Evidently not. My man was cold and haughty toward him—came as near giving him a dead cut as he could without doing so."

"Who and what was the other?"

To answer that question involved a statement of the episode of rescuing Miss Eustace, the call of the father, and the strange incident upon the corner of Third Avenue and Twenth-ninth Street.

When Dorison finished, the old man, who had been an attentive listener, said:

"The meeting of these two men was mysterious. Something wrong there. So this man spoke to your man, eh?"

"Yes, attempted to, but was repelled by the other."

"Mr. Eustace discovered your strong resemblance to your father. You must follow that up. You must cultivate his acquaintance."

"To what end?"

"He was intimate with your father, and you may find him valuable in solving the mystery of that unfinished letter."

"Oh," exclaimed Dorison, with peculiar emphasis, "I had supposed that inquiry was lost sight of in the superior importance of the other."

The old man keenly regarded the other, as he gave expression to the slight sarcasm.

"Do you not know," said Cathcart, impressively, "that in the revelation of the mystery of one, the mystery of the other will be revealed?"

Somewhat abashed, Dorison hesitated before he replied:

"You have not been particularly communicative as to your theories. I have followed you blindly."

"I believe success is more surely attained by keeping my plans to myself," replied Cathcart calmly.

"I do not complain," replied Dorison hastily. "I recognize my own want of skill, and therefore am content to obey implicitly."

"And thereby be most useful. Now seek this man of yours. You need not come to me until you have learned all you can. Let me tell you for your own satisfaction, that notwithstanding your belief that the one thing in which you are particularly interested is being overlooked, that I have devoted the past three days, and will possibly for several days to come, to a most searching inquiry into the relations your father maintained for the years immediately preceding his death. What I have learned I shall not tell you, for I have not yet digested it. As soon as you can accomplish it, arrange so I can get a good look at your man."

Dorison, as he walked away from Cathcart, felt as if he was a very inexperienced man, and had much yet to learn of the ways of the world.

It was in this frame of mind that he sought the

Hoffman House for breakfast. The hour was not early, and he was enabled to obtain one of those tables adjoining the windows looking out on Broadway, where he could watch the tide of humanity as it floated by. He was so much engrossed in this watching that he did not observe a gentleman rising from a table near him, and cross the room to his own table. It was Bushnell, the one whom he had seen in the theater the previous evening with the man with the thumb.

"I suppose an apology for my abrupt departure last evening is due you, Mr. Dudley," he said.

Dorison replied courteously:

"The apology was made in the very cause of interruption."

"I am glad you take it so politely. I'll answer your question now. The name of the gentleman you inquired about is Eustace, and there is no better fellow alive than Charley Eustace."

"Eustace!" said Dorison in surprise. "Eustace! indeed. What Eustace?"

"He is the son of Herbert Clavering Eustace, an old New York family of wealth and social position. Charley has been abroad for many years, having only returned a few months ago. Do you know the family?"

"I can hardly say I do, although I had a call from Mr. Eustace yesterday evening. Earlier in the day I had the honor of saving his daughter from being run over on Broadway, and he called to acknowledge the service."

"Indeed!" replied Bushnell, "was she injured? I heard last evening she was ill—I presume it was she who was ill—there are two daughters, you know."

"I did not know it," answered Dorison. "Miss Eustace was not injured, though she was knocked down by a horse; but that she might be ill from the shock she received, I can readily believe."

"Yes it must be she," returned Bushnell. "Charley, who had not been home to dinner—indeed he maintains bachelor apartments—did not know of it last night when we were together. She is a charming girl."

Dorison did not reply for a moment or two. His mind was busy with thoughts of how singularly the affairs of these people were becoming tangled with his own.

His companion rattled on:

"I saw you were much attracted to Charley last evening. Everybody is. He carries the stamp of his good-fellowship on his face."

"I was much interested in him. Does he follow a profession!"

"No; he has studied surgery here and abroad."

Dorison gave such a visible start that his companion stopped in wonderment and looked at him.

"It is nothing," said Dorison, casting about for a reason for his involuntary manifestation of surprise. "I saw a man that moment on the street I could have sworn was two thousand miles from here. You say your friend studied surgery abroad?"

"Yes, here and abroad. But I doubt if he will ever practice it. He is independently wealthy by the will of an uncle, and he has his share in his father's estate, which is not small. Would you like to meet him?"

"Very much indeed."

"He will dine with me to-night here at six, and if you will join us in this room at that hour I will be pleased to have you."

Accepting the invitation gladly, the two young men parted at the door of the restaurant.

"Fortune favors me," muttered Dorison to himself. "The opportunity to observe the young man Cathcart desired is made for him. I must find him and give him notice."

The work of finding the old detective was not so easy, and the greater part of the day was consumed in the search. Indeed, when he was found, there was barely time left Dorison in which to prepare for dinner and meet his engagement.

CHAPTER XI.

TALL, SLIM, WITH BROWN HAIR.

CATHCART had said he would be present at the Hoffman café at the time of the dinner.

Consequently, when the three gathered about a round table in the middle of the room on the corner of Broadway and Twenty-fifth Street, Dorison looked about for the old detective. He was not present as yet. Noting his absence, but believing he would soon appear, he gave himself up to the enjoyment of the dinner.

It progressed with a good deal of light, humorous talk, much of it devoted to the long sojourn of Eustace abroad and his experience there. If Dorison had been attracted by Eustace's appearance, he was doubly so when brought into close personal contact. Modest, light-hearted, gay, brimming with intelligence and overflowing with humor, Dorison thought he was the most engaging person he had ever met, and recollection of the tragedy in which he was supposed to have borne so horrible a part passed away under the influence of the hour. The doubt thrown by Cathcart upon the accuracy of his own conclusions, contributed not a little to this result.

Dorison and Eustace were manifestly drawn

toward each other; it was plain to Bushnell that they had discovered a great liking for each other almost at first sight, and they did not part for the evening until they had made plans for an early meeting.

In the mean time, however, Dorison wondered why Cathcart did not come. He was anxious to have him do so, for he desired the old detective should see he had made no mistake. Further, he desired to tell the old man what he had learned earlier in the day—that Eustace had studied surgery—a fact he had suppressed until after the detective had confirmed the accuracy of his own observations. The dinner was drawing to a close, and still the old detective had not put in an appearance, to his great disappointment.

Finally Eustace and Bushnell rose, bent upon an engagement they had previously made. As they donned their overcoats, a man with black bushy beard and hair, who had been sitting at an adjoining table, rose also, and passed close to Dorison on his way out. The latter felt a slip of paper thrust between his fingers.

So soon as he could he looked at the slip. It was a bit torn from the margin of a newspaper, and on it was penciled these words: "Wait for me in the office of the hotel."

Wondering who the stranger could be, and what business he could have with him, and speculating as to what the message so strangely communicated could portend, Dorison lit a cigar and wandered

into the office. Pacing up and down the long corridor he thought upon the singularity of events which had crowded upon him during the previous forty-eight hours. He marveled to note how each seemed in some manner to hinge upon the others. While all this aroused a deep interest within him, it also caused a feeling of unrest, of feverish excitement Yet this had the compensating effect of taking him out of that condition of despondency and melancholy which had become almost a part of his nature. While he was speculating upon the possible outcome of these events, Cathcart suddenly appeared before him.

"You were wholly right," he said quietly, before Dorison could remark upon his failure to appear in time. "It is the hand and the glove as well. I observed the gloves as he put them on."

Dorison stared at him in astonishment. A light broke upon him.

"You were the man with black hair and beard," he said.

"Yes; didn't you know me?"

"Know you. I did not dream it was you. You were completely disguised."

"You did your work excellently well," said Cathcart, ignoring the compliment, as if disguises were matters of hourly occurrence. "But I was never more puzzled than I am now. If one could only trust to appearances. If I were to do so in this case I would dismiss all idea of young Eustace being implicated in that murder as preposterous.

I had my lesson, however, twenty years ago. I was given the work of tracing the murder of a whole family in a town in Illinois. Indications pointed to a young girl living in the family. When I saw her sweet, soft, innocent eyes, her face almost angelic in its expressions, and her pretty coaxing manners, I dismissed suspicion of her and went off on a theory which led to nothing. She moved away, and two years after was caught in the very act of crime. Having been convicted, she confessed these murders, and an examination into her life showed her to be a monster of depravity. It was inconceivable that one so young and tender could be so black."

"You have returned to the theory then that Eustace is the man you want," commented Dorison, disappointment and regret plainly visible.

"I have neither returned to nor abandoned that theory," replied Cathcart. "I hold everything in abeyance pending further inquiry. Our puzzle does not fit—the pieces do not match. We supposed that the wearer of that glove was tall and slim with brown hair. In other words, that the wearer of the glove, the tall, slim man, and the walker in Union Square were one and the same man. What we have discovered is, that the wearer of the glove is one person. Whether the tall, slim man and the exquisite of Union Square are one or two persons, has yet to be determined. My theory has gone astray just so far. What was it we learned in school?—*Falsus in uno falsus in omnibus.* If I

am wrong in one particular I may be wrong in all."

"Eustace could not have been either the caller at stated intervals nor the exquisite of Union Square, exquisite though he is."

"Why?"

"Because he has been continuously absent from the country for six years, until four months ago."

"Another complexity. Why should he return home after so long an absence to murder two inoffensive women?"

"He is a surgical student, having studied here and abroad," said Dorison.

"The devil!" said Cathcart. "The proofs accumulate against him. You know that to be true?"

"His friend Bushnell told me so."

"The case presents more perplexities than any I ever was engaged in."

"Those gloves were not made in this country," said Dorison irrelevantly, though thoughtfully.

"Just what I have been thinking since you told me he has but recently returned from Europe. Well," continued the old detective, "there has been substantial gain. We have discovered the owner of the glove, and at the proper time we can compel him to explain its close proximity to the body of the murdered woman. He must have had some relation to the woman, and if not guilty of the murder, must be possessed of knowledge concerning them. You must gain his confidence. You are in a fair way to do it."

"I never entered upon an enterprise with greater reluctance or loathing," replied Dorison. "I freely confess I have an extraordinary liking for the young fellow. It seems like treachery to seek his friendship to his own undoing."

"That does not necessarily follow," sharply replied Cathcart. "But you must put aside all such notions, if you propose to succeed in your search. Recollect the interest you have at stake—the rehabilitation of your own good name."

"I know, I know," hastily responded Dorison. "Nothing shall swerve me from that. But even with this before me I cannot repress a feeling of regret for that proud father and tender sister when disaster shall overtake the son and brother, nor the remorse I feel in anticipation that I shall be an instrument of its precipitation."

"Better curb that imagination of yours until you see that you have precipitated disaster upon them," said Cathcart contemptuously, evidently annoyed at what he thought was a lack of proper spirit.

A moment later, his mind having reverted to the practical bearings of the matter, he said :

"Cultivate an intimacy ; become a visitor to his family ; impress yourself upon the father, and get him to talk of your own father if possible."

Nettled, stung indeed, by the way the old man had treated his sentimental outburst, Dorison steeled himself and replied curtly :

"Give me your instructions. They shall be obeyed to the best of my ability."

The old man fixed his keen eyes upon the younger one for a moment, and turned as if to leave him. As he did so, Dorison hastily placed his hand on the detective's arm, detaining him and whispering:

"Do you see that man who has just entered alone?"

"Yes."

"That is the one who crossed my path three times yesterday—first, when I rescued Miss Eustace; second, when I saw him have that mysterious meeting at Twenty-ninth Street and Third Avenue, and lastly when he attempted to speak with Eustace and was rebuffed."

"Ah!" said Cathcart, as he closely watched the young man walk up the long corridor.

"Tall, slim, and brown haired," he muttered.

Dorison started with surprise.

"Dressed in clothes of extreme fashion," added Cathcart.

Dorison felt his heart bound.

"Dissipated and fast in appearance."

Dorison saw the resemblance and the pertinency of the old detective's words.

"He answers to the description of both," continued Cathcart. "Stay where you are and keep yourself out of sight."

Cathcart sauntered after the young man, who had disappeared in the direction of the art gallery.

Dorison retired behind the pile of trunks which encumbered a part of the corridor. The old detec-

tive was not gone long. When he returned it was with a letter.

"There is a letter to Captain Lawton," he said. "Jump into a cab and promise the driver three times the amount of his fare to get you quick to Headquarters. That letter asks for a discreet and intelligent shadow. Bring him back with you in the cab. I will wait for you here, unless the man goes out, when I will follow him. In that event let the shadow go to my rooms and await me there."

Dorison without question did as he was bid. As he rode speedily through the streets, his spirits and excitement rose. This appeared to be real work, real activity ; not aimless dawdling ; something the reason of which he could see. Progress was being really made. He experienced an energy and exhilaration he had not felt before. Moreover, he hailed the sudden concentration of attention upon the part of Cathcart upon the new person, as removing, or at least diverting, suspicion from Eustace. This made him glad. He made no doubt but that in the brief interval of the absence of the old detective something significant had occurred, which had justified this sudden energy. Reaching Headquarters he delivered his letter, and a moment later was leading the way to his cab, followed by the man hastily summoned, and was soon driving back as rapidly.

Entering the hotel, Cathcart met them.

"He is still here," he said to Dorison. "Stay where you are. I will rejoin you in a moment."

To the shadow he said :

"I will in a moment point out a man to you. I want to know his name, his business, his associations, his habits, in fact all you can learn about him. Report to me at any hour of the day or night you may happen to have information. Here's my address. Now follow me."

He went directly into the art gallery and pointed out the man sitting at a table near the door, which the young man was watching, without being observed by the object of their attention.

"That is your man," said Cathcart. "Find out especially where he lives and what places he haunts."

Cathcart returned to Dorison, who was awaiting his return with impatience.

"What has occurred?" he asked anxiously.

"Nothing," replied the old detective curtly. "I shall go to bed now. I am tired. You have done a good day's work to-day."

What further might have passed between them was prevented by the appearance of the young man on his way out of the hotel.

The shadow was behind him.

"Good-night," said Cathcart, as he too moved off.

Dorison had already learned not to question him, and so he did not seek to detain the old man.

He too went out in the night air to cool his burning excitement.

CHAPTER XII.

NARROWING THE CIRCLE.

THE days immediately following the exciting events which have been detailed in the previous chapters were uneventful.

Dorison had fallen again into what he called aimless dawdling. The high hopes of rapid progress he had begun to entertain died within him, and despair took possession.

The shadow had faithfully followed his man and had reported to Cathcart.

"The name of the man was Harry Langdon; he had come from Chicago three years previously, and was supposed to be a man of independent means since he had no occupation; lived generally a fast life; associated to some extent with professional gamblers; seemed to know a good many loose characters and 'crooked' men without associating with any of them; visited a woman who claimed to be his wife, in Twenty-sixth Street near Third Avenue, but yet had separate apartments at No. — Twenty-eighth Street, between Third and Lexington avenues; was intimate with a Dr. Fassett, a physician of repute, who called upon him every morning either at Twenty-eighth Street or Twenty-ninth Street, always seeming to be well informed as

to which place he was at; after this call Langdon walked up Twenty-eighth or Twenty-ninth Street, as the case might be, to Madison Avenue, thence to Madison Square, crossing diagonally to the corner of Twenty-third Street, thence to Sixth Avenue, to a restaurant, where he breakfasted and where he read the papers for an hour or two, and met one or two of a half dozen who came to see him there; from thence he went whither chance or fancy led him; he had the *entrée* to all the gambling saloons, where he played frequently but irregularly, and always faro; his haunts were places of fashionable resort, and he was a frequent attendant upon the theaters."

In telling Dorison of this report, Cathcart said it was the best shadow work that had ever been done for him.

While these days were passing, the acquaintance between Dorison and young Eustace was fast ripening into intimacy. The two young men saw much of each other's apartments, and frequented the theaters together. Of the two, Eustace seemed to be the more anxious to cultivate the intimacy. There were times in these days, indeed, when Dorison shrank from this growing friendship, in which he felt he was playing a traitorous part, and could only key himself up to its continuance by constant recurrence to the thought he was thus performing a sacred duty he owed himself.

Carried by his friend to the Eustace residence, he had been received with great civility and with every

apparent disposition to treat him as a friend of the young gentleman of the house. He had been presented to the ladies of the family and had been received cordially, and especially by the one he had rescued, with all the warmth his service deserved, and all the reserve modesty demanded.

Charmed with the household, he forgot the part he was playing while within it.

In time, he was invited to a formal dinner and gladly accepted the invitation as determining his *status* as a friend of the family.

On this occasion, after the ladies had retired from the table, the elder Mr. Eustace, moving to a seat beside Dorison, again referred to the extraordinary resemblance the latter bore to his father. In an endeavor to avoid denying a relationship, Dorison tried to divert the conversation. Mr. Eustace, however, was politely persistent, seeking to inquire into the antecedents of his guest, with a view to finding if he could not establish a blood connection. Dorison was not adroit in his fence, and contented himself with simply saying that he was from Dubuque, and therefore could not be supposed to bear any relation to so old a New York family. Indeed, his effort to escape a discussion of the subject was so marked, that Mr. Eustace forebore further questioning. Dorison saw at once that he had committed a blunder, for the old gentleman froze to him immediately. Too scrupulously polite to offer indignity to a guest whom he had deliberately invited to his table, nevertheless Mr. Eustace made

Dorison feel uncomfortable, so uncomfortable indeed that he seized the first opportunity to steal away.

The episode greatly annoyed Dorison, first, because it foreshadowed an interruption in the relations he had but just established with the Eustace household, and, secondly, because he had stupidly evaded the very opportunity to induce Mr. Eustace to talk about his own relations to the elder Dorison, Cathcart had so earnestly desired him to make.

That he could not falsify about himself in that house, above any other, was the excuse he offered to himself. Had he undertaken to present the same excuse to Cathcart, it is to be very much feared that that eminently practical and extremely logical gentleman would have bluntly said, he had already falsified in permitting himself to be introduced as Dudley, and that a little more falsification, in view of the end to be gained, would have done no more harm. As it was, he went to bed thoroughly disgusted with himself, and wholly dissatisfied with the life he was leading.

Quite early, that is to say early for the habits he had fallen into, he was aroused by a message from Cathcart, brought him by the officer who had shadowed Langdon, and who seemed permanently attached to the old detective. The message bade him go as soon as he could to No. — East Twentieth Street.

Dorison had now been long enough in asso-

ciation with the old man, not to be surprised at any message. He therefore hastened to comply, but yet wondering what it could portend, and what the house was to which he was called. Arriving at the address, his wonder was increased when he found it to be a brownstone front of the first class. Nor was his wonder lessened, on being admitted without question by the servant in attendance, and in a manner which indicated his coming was expected. A rapid glance assured him that he was in the interior of a private residence, and one, also, which presented the evidences of wealth and refinement. His wonder grew with each moment, and he felt as if he was entering upon an adventure of interest.

Without a word upon the part of the servant he was ushered into a richly furnished apartment upon the right of the hall. At first his eyes, not yet accustomed to the darkened room, could but dimly distinguish three figures, but he soon realized he was in the presence of an old lady, an elderly, clerical looking gentleman, and Cathcart.

"This is the young gentleman," said Cathcart, rising as he entered.

"Mrs. Belknap, I introduce to you Mr. Dudley; Mr. Carman, Mr. Dudley, the Rev. Mr. Carman."

Motioning to Dorison to be seated, as if he were dispensing the hospitality of the house, in that masterful manner which seemed to make him the leader wherever he was placed, the old detective

continued the remarks the entrance of Dorison had evidently interrupted.

"I regard this step," he said, "as most essential to my search, or I would not have asked so great a favor. And neither would I have presumed to ask it were I not certain I had convinced the Rev. Mr. Carman of its importance. His presence here is a guarantee of my good faith."

Dorison, who had taken his seat, did not make any remark, principally, perhaps, because none was addressed to him, and perhaps, for the other, that he did not know in what character he was presented to these people, and therefore waited for some cue from Cathcart.

The old detective now turned abruptly to Dorison and said :

"Mr. Dudley, that man Langdon, in whose identity you have an interest for your own case, as I have with reference to his possible relations to the Farishes, enters Madison Square every morning and crosses to Twenty-third Street. Through my urgency Miss Belknap has consented to accompany you to the Square to see if she can recognize the man you will point out to her. I will be in the Square at the same time."

Before Dorison could seek further information, a young lady, attired for the street, entered. Dorison thought that an expression upon her face indicated she was not well pleased with the mission she was about to enter upon, but also thought he recognized, with some self-flattery, that when he was

presented, the expression changed to one of satisfaction. At all events, she accepted him graciously.

"Now, you cannot get there any too quickly," said Cathcart, with his energetic manner, hurrying them off.

In a moment more they were upon the street and walking in the direction of Fourth Avenue.

Both were evidently under some constraint, feeling, as Dorison put it afterwards, as if they had been pitchforked together.

"Perhaps, Miss Belknap," he said, "you will do me the favor of explaining the purpose and object of this expedition."

The lady cast an upward glance of incredulity as she asked:

"Do you not know?"

"Beyond the fact that I have been imperatively summoned from my slumbers at an unconscionably early hour, and that I am to point out a man whom you are to say whether or not you recognize. I know absolutely nothing."

"Really," replied the young lady, as fun and mischief twinkled in her eyes, causing Dorison to reflect that those organs were very pretty and attractive, "really, our adventure is beginning to take on an air of mystery. Are you always so amiable that you obey summons without knowing the reason of them?"

Dorison perceived she did not believe his assertion, and was desiring him to understand she thought he was mildly chaffing her.

"I assure you what I say is true," he returned earnestly. "You have no idea what an inexorable master you engage when you employ Mr. Cathcart. He has reduced me to such a state of submission that I run, fetch and carry at the least nod of his imperious head, or the least crook of his potent fingers."

"Do you mean to say," she asked, her eyes dancing with merriment, "that he has not confided to you his purpose in sending us out."

"He has not confided anything to me. He rarely does," replied Dorison lugubriously. "When my curiosity is excited slightly, he sits down on me crushingly with the remark that he confides his plans to no one, and I remain silent with fear and trembling."

The little lady laughed outright at the mock confession of submission, and inquired:

"Is not this connected with the search for the murderer of Mrs. Farish and poor Anne? And are you not interested in those poor creatures?"

"As you, or any one else, reading an account of their shocking murder, might be," he replied. "But I never even heard of them until after they were dead," following what he supposed to be the clue given him by the old detective in his introduction.

"I cannot understand it," said the young lady. "What relation do you bear to Mr. Cathcart's search for the murderer?"

"None."

"Why does he call upon you for that service you so much lament then?" she persisted.

"Mr. Cathcart is conducting an inquiry in a matter which closely concerns and affects me—an inquiry which he has undertaken at my desire."

"Oh," she cried merrily, "You have engaged a servant and found a master. But how does it touch the Farish murder."

Not knowing just what Cathcart had said before his arrival, he hardly knew how to reply. After a brief moment he said:

"That I don't know. Mr. Cathcart evidently thinks this Mr. Langdon has some relation to my affair. Does he also think he has relation to the Farish murder?"

The young lady thawed somewhat on this remark. Why, Dorison could not imagine, and he could not take the time to consider. She replied, however:

"I will enlighten you to the best of my ability. The day after the murder, Mr. Cathcart came to our house, sent there by our minister, Mr. Carman, in an endeavor to discover something about Mrs. Farish. You see, mother is one of the oldest members of our church and has always been very active in it. It was little, to be sure, that she could give him, but when talking of the reserved and lonely life the two lived, I recollected having seen Anne Farish, on three different occasions, walking in Union Square with a young man of dissipated appearance, but dressed in extreme fashion. This was noticeable, for upon each occasion she seemed

to be in deep distress, and the young man moody and menacing in manner. Then again, it was the only instance ever known, when Anne Farish was seen in company with a young gentleman."

Long before she had concluded, Dorison had grasped a sense of the meaning of their enterprise. Probably it was very stupid of him that he had forgotten this episode, which Cathcart had made a strong connecting link in his chain of reasoning, but now it came back to him with great force and he perceived the importance a recognition would have.

By this time they had reached the corner of Twenty-third Street and Broadway, and he suggested they should cross into the park. As they did so she concluded her statement.

"Therefore, a certain Mr. Langdon, with whose personal appearance you are familiar, has fallen under Mr. Cathcart's suspicions, and we are bent on an errand of discovery—to see whether this Mr. Langdon is the one whom I saw walking with Anne Farish."

"And are we to keep on walking until we meet this man," asked Dorison lightly.

"I presume so," replied the young lady, "since we have fallen under the power of this man who you say is so inexorable a tyrant."

"The edelweis blooms amid snow and ice," replied Dorison, "so out of the hard task he sets has come the charm of this association."

The young lady did not reply to this finely drawn

and clumsy compliment, but asked with some animation:

"How do you like playing detective, Mr. Dudley?"

The question was put so suddenly, that at first Dorison thought it was a trap laid for him—that she had penetrated the part he was playing. Her next remark, however, dispelled the suspicion. She said:

"I enjoy it, it gives me an excitement I do not often have."

Dorison did not a second time give expression to the gallant remark that leaped to his lips; nor indeed did he have time, for the young lady put another question immediately:

"Do you suppose Mr. Cathcart's suspicions rest upon this man as the murderer?"

"It is difficult to follow Mr. Cathcart's mind," he answered soberly. "He may be the very man he has under suspicion, or to identify him may be only a step in the maze he is following. Few will ever know until the end, just what his thoughts are. He is very skillful and wonderfully able. His sagacity, acuteness, and reasoning powers are marvelous to me."

"If," said Miss Belknap, whose quick eyes had perceived Cathcart in an adjoining path, "if he imposes onerous and unwelcome duties upon others, he does not shrink from them himself. See! There he is, also attending a 'ladye faire.' "

"The plot thickens," remarked Dorison. "Who

can she be? And what does he propose to do with her? Evidently she is a servant."

"He does not appear to be an attentive cavalier, with his chin upon his breast and his hands in his vest-pockets," commented Miss Belknap.

"He is profoundly thinking. When he carries his hands so, he is. And he is utterly unconscious of his habit."

They walked on, chatting easily. As they neared the corner of Twenty-sixth Street and Madison Avenue, Dorison saw the person they had come to observe approaching. He was passing in front of the Garden building.

"Cathcart has timed our walk well," he said, "There comes our man Langdon."

"Oh, indeed. Where?"

"Immediately in front of the Garden doors."

"Are we to turn back?"

"Better go forward and pass him slowly."

"Should we not indicate to Mr. Cathcart that the man is coming?"

"By no means. He would not thank us for that. Do not fear he will miss the man he has routed us out so early to see."

By this time they had reached the crossing of Madison Avenue and Langdon had already stepped down on it from the other side. As he approached he fixed his eyes upon Dorison, scowling as he did so, thus enabling Miss Belknap to take a fair look at him without being observed. As soon as he had passed out of hearing she said:

"That is the man. It is he without a question."

This with a tone admitting of no doubt.

"He recognized you, and does not regard you with favor," she added.

Dorison told the young lady his encounter with him at the time of his rescue of Miss Eustace, concluding his tale with these words:

"I presume no man can philosophically receive such humiliation from a lady, before other men, especially after he has boasted of a friendship between them."

They had walked up Madison Avenue as he talked, but now Miss Belknap said:

"Our task is done. I must return home."

"I hope I am not to take your remark as a dismissal, but shall be permitted to accompany you to your door?"

"Thank you," said the lady, thus giving her consent. Arriving, they found Cathcart at the door viewing with high displeasure their slow approach.

"I have been waiting for you at least ten minutes," he said sharply.

The young lady resented his tone and replied:

"That is to be regretted—by you."

But, impervious to the sarcasm, Cathcart said:

"Well, is it the man?"

"Yes."

"It was the same man?" His face lighted up.

"Unquestionably. I would have known him among a hundred. He is noticeable enough."

Cathcart was evidently greatly pleased.

"Come," he cried, "we are getting on famously."

"Did you learn anything?" asked the young lady.

"Much," was the answer in a tone which did not encourage further questioning.

Before the young lady, if she had desired, could inquire further, Cathcart said:

"Now, Mr. Dudley, I must see you. Come with me."

Dorison lingered only to take polite leave of the lady, and followed the old detective down the steps.

CHAPTER XIII.

NEW DISAPPOINTMENTS.

"WE have a good basis now," exclaimed Cathcart in high glee, as they walked to Fourth Avenue. "We know the owner of the glove; we know the walker in Union Square; and we know the caller at stated intervals. At first I supposed the three to be one. This, however, turns out not to be the case. But if the owner of the glove is one man, the other two prove to be the same person. The work ought to go straight now. I have something to show you."

Taking from his pocket a small package carefully wrapped in paper, he handed it to Dorison. It proved to be a lancet such as surgeons use, the handle of which was of tortoise-shell.

"Examine that carefully," he said, "burn it into your memory."

Dorison did as he was bid, even carefully noting the marks cut into the steel.

"Well," he said as he returned it

"That is what killed the two women.

"What," cried Dorison, startled and surprised.

"I have no doubt of it. That girl who was with me in the park was the servant of Mrs. Farish at the time she was killed. She gave me that lancet. She

found it on the parlor floor under the door. She did not find it until after the Captain and I had concluded our search of the house, and did not produce it at the coroner's inquest because no one spoke of it. Lately her conscience has troubled her about it, and when I hunted her up, she gave it to me."

"What did you hunt her up for?"

"To see whether she could recognize in Langdon the caller at stated intervals."

"Did she?"

"Perfectly. I did not even have to direct her attention to him. As soon as she saw him she cried out, 'That is the man.' "

"Why do you want me to remember the lancet?"

Cathcart glanced at Dorison, who thought he detected a fleeting expression of surprised contempt.

"Young Eustace studied surgery, didn't he?"

"Yes."

"Well, I want to know if he has a case of instruments of which this lancet may be one. Find out if you can."

If the old detective saw the gesture of disgust and impatience Dorison made, he ignored it.

"Now, one point more," he continued. "Get Eustace to talk about Langdon upon the first opportunity you have. Find out what he knows about him. There must be some reason for his haughty treatment of the fellow. I want to know what it is."

They had reached Broadway as they talked, and

continued as far as Twenty-third Street. On the corner Cathcart stopped to say:

"What may be the outcome of the discoveries of this morning, it is difficult to predict. Something must come out of them. We are no longer groping in the dark. Langdon bore some relation to the Farish family, knew something about them, was associated, it is fair to presume, with their troubles. What he does know he must reveal."

"Do you mean to take him in hand immediately?"

"No, not until I know more about his surroundings and antecedents."

"Have you not already learned all you are likely to?"

"I think not. Who is he? He came from Chicago three years ago. Notice this coincidence. Mr. Carman says Mrs. Farish sought him in trouble and distress three years ago."

"Yes, I see," said Dorison eagerly, "and Miss Belknap saw this man with the daughter since that time."

"Precisely, and these stated calls only began since three years. There is another coincidence I want you to note. Eight years ago Mrs. Farish suddenly, giving no reason, dresses in mourning. Eight years ago your father dies suddenly. Now another point. One of the slips of paper in your possession, written by your father, talks about the misdeeds of a boy named Harold. This man Langdon is called Harry by his associates. Do you see where we are slowly getting to? Now suppose—"

The old man stopped short. Dorison, greatly interested, looked up to see the cause. The old man's eyes were fixed upon an object some distance off.

Searching about for that object, Dorison saw it was a man approaching from the park who engaged the attention of Cathcart.

In a moment he recognized in the person the alert, sharp-eyed man who had had the mysterious exchange with Langdon, near the corner of Twenty-ninth Street and Third Avenue.

The person approached directly on a line with them. Cathcart, stepping back into the shadow of an adjoining door, bade Dorison to stand in front and conceal him as much as possible.

He did so, moving slightly, so that he could keep himself between the old detective and the man until he had passed on, going down Twenty-third Street.

"Do you remember the story I told you of the mysterious exchange between Langdon and another on Twenty-ninth Street," asked Dorison, after the man had passed by.

"Yes, and what then?" sharply asked Cathcart.

"That man was the other one."

Cathcart grasped Dorison's arm with such a grip that the latter nearly cried out with pain.

"Are you sure? Man, man, are you sure?"

"Sure, yes."

The old man fairly dragged Dorison after him as he hurriedly followed the man, who by this time had

crossed Fifth Avenue and was apparently lost in the throng.

Hurrying along, they saw him standing in front of a house, since transformed, where once another celebrated murder was committed.

His head was bent to the ground, and he appeared to be debating with himself whether he should go on or turn back.

Cathcart, dodging behind Dorison, muttered:

"He saw me, and is trying to find out if I am following him."

Whether the old man was right or not, the man continued on his way, moving along at a rapid gait.

"He is going to meet Langdon," said Cathcart.

"Who is this man!" asked Dorison, as they followed him.

"His name is Pittston," replied Cathcart. "Some four or five years ago I was on a bank robbery in Chicago. I made up my mind it had been done through connivance from the inside. Pittston was a clerk in the bank. My suspicions fell on him. The President, whose relative the clerk was, would not have it, and was indignant at the idea, for Pittston lived with him. Persisting in my belief, I had so many obstacles thrown in my way that I gave up the job in disgust. They dismissed the clerk some time after. He knew all about it, for he assaulted me afterwards in the Palmer House, charging me with attempting to ruin him. I must locate him, for I have some facts that will make him open his mouth wide."

While he rapidly told this to Dorison, Sixth Avenue had been reached, and Pittston turned to go up it.

Cathcart stopped on the corner.

"You must do some shadow work now," he said. "I am certain he is going to that restaurant to meet Langdon. You must go there and see if he does not meet him. Learn what you can. I will wait for you at the Hoffman House."

Dorison without reply went at once to the restaurant designated as the one daily visited by Langdon. Entering, he sat himself at a table in the middle of the room, from which point he thought he could command a view of the room. It was an eating-saloon of the third or fourth class, though well kept and cleanly. A waiter bustled up and received an order for a substantial breakfast.

As he looked about, Dorison could see neither Langdon nor Pittston, and feared that he had gone into the wrong place. Examination of the room, however, showed him an opening in the side wall—a passage way, making the adjoining room a part of the eating saloon.

He rose from his chair to investigate, and walking down the room, saw that the cashier's desk was so placed as to command both rooms. On this desk was a mirror tilted forward so that the cashier could, with a slight turn of his head, observe each of the two rooms. Dorison also found that by taking a seat at a table next the opening, he could see each occupant of the front part of the next room.

He therefore changed to this table and immediatley discovered the pair he was in search of. Sitting at a table situated relatively as the one he was seated at, with only the wall between the two, Langdon and Pittston were deeply engaged in conversation.

Pittston was telling a tale which evidently gave great annoyance to his companion. Langdon frowned, and his manner indicated a considerable degree of alarm. He listened intently until Pittston had finished, and fell into a profound study, from which from time to time he emerged to ask a question, when, being answered, he relapsed again into thought.

In the meantime Dorison's breakfast was served and eaten. He had not heard a word of the conversation of the two he had come to watch, nor did there seem to be any likelihood that he would be able to hear any of it. He had, however, established two facts. Pittston had sought Langdon as Cathcart had foreseen, and confidential relations existed between them. Believing he could do no more, he was about to depart, when the street door of the room he was in opened and the officer the old detective used as a shadow, entered.

Dorison beckoned to him.

"Do you want to see me," he asked, as the officer came to him.

"The old man wants me to follow and report a man he thinks is here with Langdon," was the whispered reply.

Dorison pointed to the mirror.

"Is that the man?" asked the officer.

"Yes—the one talking to Langdon. Now get away so they will not see you talking to me."

The officer was not a moment too soon in leaving, for the pair in the other room rose from their table and went to the cashier's desk.

Turning indifferently as he leaned on the desk, Langdon saw Dorison and started with surprise, scowling at him meanwhile. Dorison maintained his composure, conducting himself as if he did not recognize him as the man he had met that morning.

Calling the waiter, Dorison gave him something more than the amount of his check, and without waiting for the change, donned his top-coat and went out, conscious that Langdon had directed the attention of his companion to him, Dorison.

As the door closed on Dorison, Pittston said:

"Hanged if I don't think that very man stood close to the one I was telling you of."

"Who, Cathcart?"

"Yes."

"Then you *were* followed."

"Nonsense! He was not talking to Cathcart, only standing near him. I tell you I was not followed; I stopped to see."

"What else but to follow you brought such a swell as that here—a man who either breakfasts at 'Del's' or the Hoffman every morning."

This had been said within the hearing of the cashier, who asked:

"Talking about the man who has just gone out, Harry?"

"Yes."

"He changed his seat," said the cashier, "from the middle of the room, and seemed to be watching you by that mirror."

"The devil!" cried Pittston. "Could he do that?"

"Try it!" laughed the cashier.

The two quickly satisfied themselves that, sitting where Dorison did, watching them at their table was an easy matter.

"A curious thing occurred," continued the cashier, when they returned to his desk. "A man came in whom your man recognized right away, and beckoned to him. They whispered together, and then your man pointed to the mirror. The other man went out right away."

"By—" cried Langdon, with an oath, "you *were* followed."

"I am afraid so," replied Pittston gloomily.

The two walked to the street door, where Langdon halted to say:

"There are two things to do. You must walk as straight as a die and do no business, go nowhere you are afraid any one should see you, and keep away from me. That's the first thing. Next, when you go from here, I will watch to see if you are followed by anybody. I suspect that to be the game. If you are I will let you know. Not hearing from me means you were not followed."

"Who is this fellow anyhow," asked Pittston.

"I don't know, except that his name is Dudley. He's a howling swell and goes with the best. The first time I saw him he saved a young lady of my acquaintance from being run over. She didn't know him then, but now he's as thick as peas with her brother, and he goes to the house often. This very morning I met him in Madison Square walking with a stunning-looking girl. I hate him and would like to dose him, especially since I find him interfering in my affairs."

"Mine, I should say," said Pittston with a laugh.

"No, mine," persisted Langdon.

"I don't see it. If he followed any one he followed me."

"That may be," said Landgon impatiently. "But it all comes back on me. I have good reason for saying so, since I know he is such a great friend of young Eustace. That is what makes me so uneasy—this following of you."

"I don't see the connection."

"See here. Cathcart can't be following you for the Chicago affair, can he? That affair is closed up, and you have told me you were protected in it by your uncle for the sake of the family."

"Yes; that's so."

"Well, if you were not followed for that, you were for something, weren't you?"

"Yes, there was some reason of course."

"Now, here it is. They're after me, and because they followed you I am afraid they have got onto

the business we have together, and want to strike at me through that. Do you tumble now?"

"I see. It is serious." Pittston was thoughtful. "Drop the whole business for a while."

"By ———," cried Langdon with another oath. "Its dropped for us. My man is kicking, and refuses to go any further in it. I was going to put the screws on him to find out what is the meaning of his sudden independence. But this thing comes up and it won't do. I don't know but what he's been giving the snap away."

"I thought you had him so tight that he had to do what you told him?"

"So would any one think who knew what I have got on him," replied Langdon, angrily. "But now he is doing the high and mighty, and swears if I push him any further he'll kick the whole bucket over and land me in jail for life, even if it ruins him. He says he'd rather die than be the slave he has been to me for the last three years."

"But can he?" asked Pittston.

"He can, if he knows something I did some years ago. But, by Heaven! I'm certain he don't—he can't. The people who knew about it are all dead. I'm playing him to know what card he's got up his sleeve. While I'm playing him we must drop the business. Give the word that way."

They went into the street, Langdon remaining at the door. Pittston first walked to the corner of Twenty-third Street, and turning came back and went in the direction of Twenty-fourth Street.

As he disappeared, Langdon muttered :

"The chase ended when they ran him down to me. He is not followed."

At that very moment the officer was close on the heels of Pittston as he walked up Twenty-fourth Street to Broadway.

Dorison had gone to the Hoffman House, where he met Cathcart, to whom he related what had occurred.

"I am more than satisfied that Pittston recognized me," said Cathcart. "But that is a matter easily overcome. If he recognized me, he saw you. That is not so easily overcome. Hereafter we must not meet openly. We are getting to the end pretty fast.

"I hope so," rejoined Dorison doubtfully, "but I frankly confess the end seems as far off as ever it did."

"Possibly it does to you. Nevertheless the lines are coming together with tolerable rapidity. One day, when you least expect it, I will call upon you to witness the falling of the blow."

CHAPTER XIV.

LOWERING SKIES.

THE events of the morning gave Dorison food for thought. After Cathcart had departed he dawdled about the hotel as he endeavored to extract some intelligence from these events, serving to justify the confidence displayed by the old detective that the end was in sight.

He reviewed his life during the six weeks elapsing since his return to the city of his birth, and carefully went over the events connected with the search with which he was identified. The result was not satisfactory. Everything was fragmentary. There was a bit here and a bit there which, considered by themselves, seemed important and significant, but when he attempted to put them together they appeared disconnected and inconsistent, even contradictory.

"Whether this is due," he said aloud, as he sat and pondered, "to the miserly and fragmentary manner in which Cathcart deals out his information, or, whether it is the exact condition of the case, I am utterly at a loss to determine. I know, however, it is utterly unsatisfactory, and unless something more positive turns up within the next fortnight I will throw up my commission. So far as I am able

to see not one step has been made, nor one single fact gathered that brings us nearer to the end, the accomplishment of which is the only justification for my being involved in it at all."

He got up and walked into the street. As he went up Broadway he said:

"What I will do, will be to see Mr. Nettleman and have a talk with him. That much is due him and I have not seen him for two weeks. I'll do it this very afternoon. The life I am leading is unbearable."

He did not go that afternoon, however, for on reaching his rooms he found his friend Eustace in possession.

"I have been waiting so long for you," he cried, "that I have come to believe these apartments are mine. Do you know, I like them better than my own."

"Then perhaps you may obtain them," said Dorison.

"Why? What does that mean?"

"It means, Eustace, that you see a disgusted and contemptible creature before you. I am half persuaded to cut this life and go back to Dubuque."

"Something has gone wrong, *ma chère*. The blues, eh? I have them sometimes myself."

"My trouble is far greater than the blues," said Dorison, throwing himself at full length upon the lounge, and looked at Eustace fixedly for some time.

"I wonder, Charley," he said at length, "if there will be a time when you will regard me with bitter-

ness and contempt—when you will never be able to think of me without loathing and horror."

"What condition of mind are you in to-day?"

"The confessional, although I shall make no confession. Perhaps all these dark and gloomy vapors will pass away and the bright sunbeams play over us both. Whether any sunlight, however, will ever irradiate my life again, I greatly doubt. Charley my boy, I am a monomaniac. I have but one purpose in life and to that I am bending everything, sacrificing everything—home, comfort, honor and friends. Beware of me! I am not what I seem on the surface. During my life I have never met any one of either sex to whom I have been so much attracted as I have been to you—no one of whom I have been so fond. Yet, my boy, heed me. If you should run counter to this life purpose of mine, so completely have I become its slave, I believe I would sacrifice you. I say again, beware of me. Hold me off at arm's length. Do not give me a single advantage. God knows that when I am in the mood I am now, I pray fervently that the friendship we have formed within the past few weeks may ripen with our days, strengthen with our years, and be still hale when our heads are gray. But I tell you, old man," and he rose from the lounge in his earnestness, "the day is coming when that friendship will be put to as severe a test as friendship ever was."

Eustace, who had regarded Dorison seriously, said:

"I think you are in a frame of mind which either is the result of a serious physical derangement, or great mental tribulation. If it is the latter, and I apprehend it is, I advise you to take immediate steps toward remedy. And in such cases, I take it, the best remedy is to pour out your confidences to some friend you can trust."

"There are some things that must be borne alone," replied Dorison with a sigh. "Mine is one. For eight years I have borne them—"

"And alone, nursing them," interrupted Eustace. "That is just it."

"Borne, they must be, alone to the end," replied Dorison. "Did you ever have a serious secret influencing your life and nature, which you would not reveal lest it brought you the contempt and horror of your friends—those you thought the most of?"

Eustace's face flushed red.

"Yes," he replied, falteringly, "which, if I thought it would become public I would kill myself from shame and disgrace."

Dorison heard these words with his heart bounding against his ribs.

"Is this tantamount to a confession?" he asked himself.

Shaken and agitated, he walked to the window and looked out. Then, turning impulsively to Eustace, he cried out:

"Away with these thougths! I'll have none of them. What brought you here to put me into this condition?"

"I did not come here to put you into any condition, nor did I, for you were in your present mood when you entered. What I did come here for was to ask you what occurred between you and the *pater* last evening," replied Eustace.

"I think your father's treatment last night has something to do with my present frame of mind. You see," he laughed bitterly. "I am bound to put it on some one of your family. To answer your question,—I don't know. Your father was agreeable and pleasant to me as one could wish during the early part of the dinner. He has discovered in me some strong resemblance to an old friend, and attempted to supply me with a new set of relatives. The attempt involved an inquiry into my family relations. I am not always a master of my own moods, and I took the caprice to object to talking about them before strangers. Probably I was not as sensible of the honor done me by a gentleman of the distinction of your father, in manifesting an interest in my surroundings, as I should have been, and gave offense by my evasion of the inquiry. If it be not that, I know not what it is. At all events he froze to me."

"Yes, I noticed he did," replied Eustace. "However, if that is all, the matter will be soon righted. Now my next reason for calling. I am thinking of giving a small theater party next Monday night, with a snack afterwards at Del's. Will you be one?"

"With pleasure."

"Will you escort my sister—Evelyn, you know?"

"I am honored."

"And not frighten her with a gloomy outburst and warn her to beware of you?"

Dorison blushed and smiled.

"I will endeavor to justify her brother's confidence."

For a little time there was silence between them, when Dorison suddenly said:

"Eustace, the first night I ever saw you, a man named Langdon approached you. You treated him with considerable *hauteur*. Who is the fellow?"

The young man turned a sharp, inquiring look upon Dorison; his face flushed, and a vexed expression came into his eyes.

"Why do you ask? He cannot be a friend of yours?"

"No, not even an acquaintance, but I have reason for knowing more about him than I do."

"The fellow was somewhat offensive to my sister Evelyn, the day you saved her from being run over, I think."

"It did not appear to me that Miss Eustace relished his assumption of friendship."

"I should think not," replied Eustace, indignantly. He looked out of the window for a few moments, Dorison waiting for him to continue. After a while he said:

"I don't know much about the fellow, Dudley. To begin at the beginning, this is all I know. Something more than a year ago my younger sister,

then about fifteen, was taken seriously ill and our regular family physician was unable to do anything for her, a fact he acknowledged himself, and suggested the calling in of other physicians. That was done, but she continued to decline, and both mother and father were nearly frantic. When she was at her worst, and when the physicians were despairing, some one called father's attention to a young physician named Fassett, who was making marvelous cures. Our own physicians, having admitted their inability to cope with the strange difficulty, could not object to his being called. He was, and declared the difficulty to be principally a nervous one, and began a treatment diametrically opposed to that she had been under. Notwithstanding the protests of her other physicians against the treatment, she improved steadily. In the course of a few months she was completely restored to health. Of course you can understand that under the circumstances our people were grateful to Dr. Fassett, and though father said that from the first he appreciated that Dr. Fassett was far from being a gentleman, he was loaded with attention by our people; he had saved the pet of the household when she was given up to die. Then mother fell sick and Evelyn, and they were both brought triumphantly through by Dr. Fassett, who is undeniably a skillful physician, but as well a course, vulgar man. No one can get upon more familiar terms with a family than its physician, and one day, without asking consent or permission,

he introduced into the family this fellow Langdon—an insufferable cad, vulgar, ill-bred, dissipated and coarse. Without request the fellow began to call, until finally orders were given the servants to say no one was at home when he called. Father tells me he had quite a scene with Dr. Fassett over this, and was obliged to tell him that his position as medical adviser to the family put him, father, under no social obligations, and that if, in addition to the fees he exacted, he demanded social recognition for all of his friends, much as it was to be regretted, the relations between them must cease."

"But that did not end the persecutions. Langdon seemed to have secret sources of information, and turned up at the theaters and other public places where our folks went, and forced himself upon them; more than that, waylaid my sisters on the street. This was going on when I returned from Europe and was told of it. So, the first time it occurred when I was near, I took Langdon aside and forbade him to speak to my sisters or mother again, promising him a jolly good thrashing if he ever presumed to do so. Hang the cad, if he had shown fight then, or had not subsequently attempted to ingratiate himself with me, I would have had some respect for him."

Eustace hesitated, as if he had something more to say, and Dorison waited for him to continue.

"Hang it all, Dudley, I think I'll tell you the whole story. I could not to one I regarded less as a friend than I do you. The annoying thing about

it all is yet to come, and is to a certain degree humiliating. The only excuse lies in the extreme youth of my sister Dorothy, who is but sixteen now. Of course she was grateful to Dr. Fassett, and he has naturally obtained a considerable influence over her. She began first with taking up his quarrel against the family and espousing the cause of this fellow Langdon. I am quite certain that Fassett has been endeavoring to make interest with Dorothy for Langdon. At all events, I found out that Langdon was managing to see her alone, and she—foolish and romantic creature—began to be interested in him. He was bent on mischief. His desire was, of course, to win and marry her, and force himself on the family. This is our secret, and the proof of my friendship for you is that I give it to you."

"Thank you," said Dorison simply.

"We have taken steps to prevent this thing. Hard as it is, we have had to keep a strict surveillance upon Dorothy for some time now, and in the spring the family will go to Europe to escape the fellow. But this is not my way of dealing with him or with Fassett. The latter I would deny the house, and the former I would deal with vigorously, but everything is bended to prevent a scandal. Who the fellow is, or what he is, I don't know. He has a wonderful influence over Fassett, and, in my judgment, it is not through superior intellect or force of character, for he is in both deficient, but through the possession of some secret in Fassett's

life. Of course that is mere supposition, and I base it wholly on the manner in which he treats Fassett and the latter's subserviency, so foreign to his nature. Fassett says he has known him for years, and that he was a fellow student of his at a western medical college, where he failed to take his degree by withdrawing just before the close of his term. I've told you all I know about the fellow, except that his associates here in town seem to be thoroughly disreputable."

"I have no knowledge of him," said Dorison, "except that he touches an affair in which I have some interest, and was therefore desirous of knowing more—an affair, let me say, lest I be charged with not giving confidence for confidence, which really belongs to another person and of which I have no right to speak without his permission. By the way, did not Bushnell tell me that you were a medical student?"

"Student," repeated Eustace, in mock indignation, "Behold an M.D. Dr. Eustace, at your service—I have my degree. Yes I am an Esculapian. I devoted myself to the surgical branch, but I have never practiced. Long before I attained my degree I abandoned all idea of it. I threw my parchment aside with my books—never assumed my title. Why, I never bought an instrument, never even owned one."

He had answered the very question Dorison was leading up to, before it was asked.

Shortly after he went away, and Dorison, re-

clining in his easy arm-chair, said, talking to himself:

"Cathcart's theory was that these murders were committed by a tall, slim man with brown hair, whose hands were large, knuckles and joints prominent and thumb disproportionately long and large, who was a dandy in dress and who possessed a certain degree of surgical skill. He suspects Charley Eustace and Harry Langdon. The latter is tall, slim, with brown hair, small and well-shaped hand, a dandy, a caddish dandy in dress, and has a certain degree of surgical skill; the former is short, stout, and light haired; has large hands, prominent joints and knuckles, a disproportionately large thumb, is a dandy, a gentlemanlike dandy in dress, and has a certain degree of surgical skill, though he never owned a surgical instrument. Bah! Take your choice. Detective skill is a humbug. Cathcart is a fraud, and you, Dorison, are a fool for submitting longer to his tomfoolery. Chase it as long as you will, the rehabilitation of your name is the *ignis fatuus* of your life. And poor, fluttering fool that you are, you will continue to pursue it until death gives you the only relief you will ever have."

He picked up a book and fell asleep over it.

CHAPTER XV.

CRUSHING A REBELLION.

IN no better frame of mind, Dorison awoke. Yet he remembered the old detective's instructions to report as soon as he had anything to tell. So he set out, and in time found Cathcart in his rooms in Bond Street, busy with papers he pushed aside to listen to his visitor.

When the tale was finished, the old man made no comment, but paced up and down his room with his hands in his vest-pockets, the young man in the meantime sitting by with clouded brow, twirling his hat in his hands, leaning his elbows on his knees. Finally, straightening up, he said:

"Don't you think tomfoolery ought to end and real work begin?"

Had the old detective been struck in the face unexpectedly, he could not have given a greater start.

"What do you mean?" he demanded savagely.

"I mean I am tired of this humbug and mystery. More than two months ago we began a search with two objects in view. One, to discover the murderer of Mrs. Farish and her daughter, the other to discover the mystery of my father's unfinished letter. You readily enough builded a theory, and it amounts to practically nothing. You set out upon the idea

that a tall, slim dandy with brown hair and a peculiar hand and thumb, who possessed surgical skill, was the murderer. Search has determined two men who divided these characteristics between them. One is a tall, slim dandy with brown hair, who has surgical skill with small well-shaped hands. The other has the peculiarity of hands and thumbs but is a short, stout, fair dandy, with surgical skill."

"Well?" said Cathcart sternly.

"I am tired of balancing one against the other; I am tired of this mystery; I am tired of the way you keep me in the dark, doling meagre glimpses of the case. So far as I am able to see, not a fact has been gained, not a step has been made toward the end I have in view and which is the only justification for my being in the case. I have become a mere puppet in your hands and am living a life of hypocrisy and falsehood, the very reverse of everything honorable, without results, except to an end in which I have no special or personal interest."

"I believe you take my money for the work you do. Have I complained?" sarcastically observed Cathcart.

"To earn the money I receive is not the object of my putting myself subject to your orders. All I do receive is expended in this business as you direct. The chief, and I may say the only, pay I look to is the explanation of my father's letter. But for that I would be out of this business in a moment. The employment is foreign to my habits, my nature, and my tastes."

Cathcart looked darkly at Dorison for a long time while busy with his thoughts.

"I have been considered for many years a master of my art," he said at length. "It is a very long time since I permitted any one, either to complain or to criticise, as you have done. The reason why I have done so in your case must chiefly be because I have taken a genuine liking to you, and because I have had a real sympathy for your extraordinary case. If I don't throw you over now and devote myself wholly to the murder case, it must be because I see that you are morbid over your own wrongs and have a better excuse for impatience and despondency than most men who have attempted to complain and criticise to me. My own personal concern in this matter is wholly a matter of pride. I desire to round off a career of prominence and distinction in the West, with a triumph in the East. This is probably the last inquiry I shall ever be engaged in, and I desire to win the glory of succeeding where the Eastern detectives have failed.

"Now, so much by way of preface. My own belief is that I could have yesterday brought the murder question to an issue, were it not for the fact that your own matter was not advanced to a stage I desired. I believe the germs of that unfinished letter and the murders are to be found in the one condition of affairs.

"Listen to me and be ashamed. I have done little in the murder case but direct your movements. You have put into my hands the material

by which I am certain that within the next twenty-four hours I could put into custody the murderer, were I to devote myself to the effort. For the past two months I have labored hard, as hard as I ever did in any two months of my life, and—" he paused to give the effect to his words, "nine-tenths of that time has been devoted to your affair. You think no fact has been gained. I know more at this moment of your father's life and business than you ever did. I have made the friendship of your father's executor. I have won him as your friend, instead of your enemy, as he has been for eight years. I have persuaded him to go to work with a belief in your innocence. He is a conscientious man and is enthusiastic in his effort to repair the wrong he has done you. I have examined the old books of the firm of which your father was so long the head, and have run down every item of personal expenditure I suspected might possibly have a bearing on your affair. I have turned over every scrap of paper in the possession of your father's executor, and I have conversed with nearly every man yet alive with whom your father did business. I have found, and to a great extent know, the cause of the dissipation of your father's great property. The work is not completed. When you came in, I was examining reports the mail brought me, which advance me another long step on the way. And this moment I can account for nearly every cent, except one block of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. This money was not lost in speculations or bad invest-

ments. It was actually spent, deliberately expended in pursuance of a deliberate intention, after having been raised by hypothecation of stock and securities. What was that purpose or intention? And why so deliberately and persistently pursued? I have only within the hour gotten to a point where I could pursue that part of the inquiry with any degree of intelligent effort or with hopes of success.

"I hold that one reason of the great success I have had in my business, has been largely due to two qualities I have possessed. First, the ability to keep my plans to myself, and, secondly, the ability with which I could command loyal assistance without the assistants knowing more of their work than I desired them to know. The information I possess has come to me in fragments, and here in this chamber I have pieced them together.

"Now then, having said this much, I shall say no more until I am ready. If you are not satisfied you are at liberty to retire from the case. I shall not conceal from you, that if you do, it will be at a time when you can be of the most use to me, and that your retirement will be the source of great delay and embarassment. But I shall not ask you to remain; you shall be absolutely free to choose."

Dorison had been intently listening to the old man, and with no little shame. He was confounded to hear that the old man had been devoting so much time to his own affair and had learned so much. He was also greatly impressed with the masterfulness of the old detective and felt that he himself

appeared as a fretful, impatient, unintelligent school boy. So he said quite humbly:

"I shall not retire."

"Very well. But you must understand that I must have unquestioning obedience."

"You shall have it."

"Very good. Now, I may say to you. I never was engaged in a case where the lines cross each other in so confusing a manner, nor did I ever have two cases I was working together wherein the persons in each case have such strange relations to each other without bringing the critical point of each case together. Here is an instance. We have young Eustace under suspicion of being in some-way connected with that murder; I believe your father, dead as he is, is in some way connected with it; I have reason to believe that the older Eustace was at one period of his life intimately connected with your father's affairs; I am certain the elder Eustace in no way touches the Farish murder. You perceive how necessary it is to maintain a clear hand and move slowly in this almost inextricable tangle of the two cases. Here are my instructions for your movements. I want you to engage the elder Eustace in a conversation as to your father. The way is open. You told me he had discovered a great resemblance between your father and yourself."

"A coolness has sprung up between the elder Eustace and myself," said Dorison.

"Indeed,—how?"

"Over that very resemblance."

The old man evinced increased interest, and demanded to know everything, the very smallest point. Thus urged, Dorison gave him a minute and careful history of the incident.

When the recital was finished the old detective thrust his hands into his vest-pockets, and dropping his chin upon his breast, closed his eyes in thought for a long time. When he spoke it was rather as if he were thinking aloud than addressing Dorison.

"When Eustace was comparatively a young man," he said, "he endangered his fortune by extravagance and bad management. Your father came to his aid, took charge of his estate, gave him financial aid, lent him the great power of his credit, and having straightened out his affairs obtained a diplomatic appointment abroad for him, so that the ravages in his fortune might be repaired; in other words, saved him from ruin. In return, Eustace did some great service for Dorison. What its nature was I cannot determine. Nor will Eustace tell as intimate a friend as he has. Perhaps he may think idle curiosity prompted the question—that he would tell if sufficient reasons were given him. At all events the career Dorison set him on has resulted in his living abroad many more years than here, since that time. Can it be—can that be the line to follow? If it should be that, that—but no, he was abroad when Dorison died—had been for several years. But would that have been any reason why it should not be so."

He relapsed again into a brown study, from which Dorison waited for him to emerge, confused and perplexed by the maze in which he found himself, and unable to perceive even a glimmer of light.

"I regret," said Cathcart rousing up, "that this misunderstanding has arisen. It would have been avoided if you had followed my instructions obediently. You did not play the part you yourself deliberately chose, before we came into contact. If you assume a rôle you must play the whole of it, or necessarily fail. You choose to pretend to be some one else, yet the first time you are seriously questioned you refuse to carry out your assumption. That was foolish. Your lie would not have been any greater in denying your paternity in words, than it was when you permitted yourself to be introduced under a name intended to deny that paternity. How can you repair the blunder? Have you quarreled with young Eustace?"

"No," replied Dorison. "He asked me this afternoon to a theater party next Monday and to escort his sister."

"Um. This is Thursday. Well, seek an interview with the elder Eustace as soon as you can, to repair the blunder."

CHAPTER XVI.

BREAD FOUND AFTER MANY DAYS.

DORISON saw nothing of Cathcart for several days. In the mean time no opportunity was presented him to have an interview with the elder Mr. Eustace, so that he might clear up the misunderstanding.

Monday came, and in pursuance of his engagement he went to the Eustace residence to escort Evelyn to the theater. He was distinctly conscious, on arriving, of an air of constraint in his reception, though so far as the young lady herself was concerned, he could see no difference in the graciousness of her manner.

At first, he was disposed to attribute everything to his imagination, until he found that Mr. Eustace was in an adjoining room, the doors of which were open, and did not come forward to meet him.

"I shall be very frank with you, Mr. Dudley," said Miss Eustace, as they drove from the door. "You have offended father in some way."

"I wish you would carry your frankness further," said Dorison in return, "and tell me in what way. I am conscious of his change of demeanor, without being certain as to its cause."

"The strange thing is that while he shows his

displeasure he refrains from telling why, though Charley urged him to do so."

"I can give no other reason than the one I gave your brother."

"I know, Charley told me. But it is not that. Charley urged that to father, but he dismissed it with a wave of his hand, as not being of the slightest importance. Of course he could not find anything in that for displeasure, and if he did, would not refrain from telling if it were so. There is something else."

"Then I am utterly at a loss. Believe me, Miss Eustace, I am too fond of your brother's friendship and too sensible of the kindness shown me within your household, not to quickly seek, with an apology, to repair any offense I may have given, if I knew wherein it lay. I really hoped that before this it would have been apparent, that I should have been enlightened either by you or your brother."

"It is something serious, Mr. Dudley, and at one time Charley thought his invitations would have to be recalled."

"So serious as that," said Dudley, thoroughly understanding that in this tactical way Miss Eustace had made him understand her father had opposed further reception of himself at the house, and had yielded his position only upon being convinced that persistence on his part would result in embarassment to his son.

"He has come to believe I am John Dorison

figuring under an assumed name—the disgraced son," he said to himself, "and not being certain does not wish to give it as a reason."

The thought troubled him, and he was not consoled by the other one occurring to him, that he had had, in the family difference, the active partisanship of Evelyn and Charley. The affair sobered him so that it was with difficulty that he could shake off his despondency.

He made the effort with these words:

"I will make a serious effort to discover the cause, Miss Eustace, and shall do all that is proper for a man to do under the circumstances."

He was certain that this assurance gave the young lady much satisfaction, and she became quite gay during the rest of the short drive.

At theater they found the rest of the party, and in the pleasure of the moment Dorison forgot the unpleasant impression that had been put upon him. He found the young lady a delightful companion, and thought she carried about her the same charm of personality possessed by her brother. She was endowed with that quality, rarely possessed by a woman—a keen appreciation of humor, and he himself, for that evening, was subject to one of those alternations men of a melancholy and despondent nature are at times. His gayety swept up to high spirits, dangerously near to boisterousness, and he was conscious of a marked endeavor to impress himself favorably upon the lady who was his companion.

He talked much at the supper after the entertainment, which was not his wont, and what was better, talked well, with a gay, capricious, and whimsical fancy; told humorous stories, showered witticisms without stint, which were entirely unpremeditated, and carried all with him into his own wild spirits.

"Upon my word, Dudley!" cried young Eustace, "I never knew you in such a mood before. If I had not been watching your glass and noticed your moderation, I would have supposed you were obtaining your inspiration from wine."

"You forget that I promised you solemnly that I would not frighten your sister with despondency. What would you? I have not a large assortment of moods at my disposal. Either deep despondency or high gayety. To-morrow I will have a wet towel around my heart while you have it around your head."

"That is a base hint that I am indulging in too much wine. I honestly believe the slur was thrown out to prevent me from describing the awfully despondent mood he was in the last time I saw him. Then he told me that he was insane, that he proposed to immolate me upon the sacrificial altar of a phantom he was pursuing, and in the most tragic manner urged me to beware of himself."

Dorison blushed and was disconcerted, but looking at Miss Eustace, his thoughts were diverted, for he perceived an expression of dislike and

annoyance flit across her face, and following her eyes, saw that Langdon had entered the room and was ostentatiously bowing to her. She did not respond except with a haughty and well-bred stare, though her brother made a gesture as if to rise from his chair.

Dorison laid his hand upon his knee :

"Do nothing, Charley ; you cannot resent the affront without a scene, and the mere act of bowing is not sufficient."

"You are right. What an insufferable bore it is that we should be haunted by this fellow."

Langdon was accompanied by a young man, and it was plain they were making the Eustace party the subject of their conversation. The incident, unimportant as it was, the meaning of which, however, was known but to Miss Eustace, her brother, and Dorison, threw a damper upon the spirits of those who had been the gayest, and soon all rose from the table. As they crossed the room it was necessary to pass near the table at which Langdon was seated with his companion.

Fearing that Langdon would attempt to secure recognition, Dorison maneuvered to get young Eustace in the lead of the party, intending to bring up the rear himself. His purpose was to prevent a scene if possible.

As he anticipated, Langdon rose as Miss Eustace approached, with a smile, intended to be engaging, ready to extend his hand. Dorison quickly changed to the side of Miss Eustace other than that on

which he was walking, thus bringing himself between her and Langdon.

It was the work of a moment, and stopping, he said sternly and menacingly :

"It should be plain to you, sir, the lady does not desire to be recognized by you."

A flush overspread Langdon's face, and his eyes shot forth an angry glance as he said :

"My pretty fellow, you are making debts for me to pay. You will have to answer for this insult. Who made you the protector of the lady?"

"Common decency, when a loafer insults her," replied Dorison, moving on quietly, before Langdon could say anything further. Miss Eustace, having penetrated his purpose, had walked on rapidly.

"Did that scoundrel attempt to speak to you, Evelyn," Dorison heard young Eustace ask, as he joined the party in the vestibule.

"Yes," replied his sister, "but was prevented by Mr. Dudley."

"You are putting my sister and our people in your debt rapidly, Dudley," said Eustace warmly.

"That he is indeed," echoed Evelyn, glancing gratefully at Dorison, in a manner which brought to his mind vividly the scene in the drug-store on the day he first met her.

"Strange," he said lightly. "But do you know that Langdon said something of the kind also."

Evelyn looked at him quickly in alarm, and exclaimed:

"I hope you will get into no trouble by it."

"No fear," replied Dorison hastily. "I shall really be obliged to him, if he will be the cause of such interest in my well-being."

All this had passed rapidly as the carriages were being called, and in a moment more he was on his way with the young lady, endeavoring to make her forget the disagreeable *contrétemps* by his gay talk.

After leaving her at her house he went straightway to his own rooms, to dream of violet eyes and golden hair, no matter how unattainable they seemed to be to him.

The following morning, on arising, he was handed a note, written hastily in pencil:

"Will Mr. Dudley meet the lady he saved from being arrested, this morning, at eleven, at the corner Lexington Avenue and 30th Street sharp. It's for his good.

"Gratefully his friend,

"BESS."

Not a little astonished, and at first deeming it to be a foolish woman's effort to draw him into an acquaintance, and moreover disgusted with it, he determined to ignore it. But, on reflection, he thought there was something significant in the fact that she had learned his name, and he further remarked to himself, engaged as he was in such a search, he had no right to cast aside any incident, however slight or insignificant or improbable it might appear.

Hence he determined to meet her as requested. As he had slept late, it was already near the hour, and so doffing his lounging jacket, he prepared for the street, and set out for the trysting place, as he laughingly termed it.

The girl was already there, and approaching him, said:

"Let us walk up Lexington Avenue. There is less chance of my being seen. I'm takin' chances doin' this. You've crossed my man some way, an' he's down on you."

"Who is your man?" asked Dorison.

"His name is Langdon."

"Oh!" said Dorison, surprised. "What is he to you?"

"He's my husband," she said quickly. "Don't you believe nothin' else. The priest didn't marry us, but we were married all the same, though he does try to act and say we weren't. But we was all the same."

"Well, what have I done, and if he is down on me, what can he do?"

"I dunno what you've done to him. But he's been grumblin' for some time about a feller named Dudley, before I know'd it was you—the one what saved me from arrest. The other day he came home growlin' about you interfering in his affairs, and last night when he came late, a fellow named Pittston was waiting for him; and he took him off in another room to talk with him. Something you did to him last night made him very mad, an' I

heard him say he'd git you dosed for it before many hours."

Dorison laughed.

"I don't think there's much to be afraid of."

"Yes, there is," earnestly replied the girl. "If there wasn't I wouldn't be takin' the chances I am. Now sir, I'm grateful to you for what ye did for me, and because after ye did it ye didn't insult me, as most men do. So I said I'd give you a warnin'. He doesn't treat me so well that I shouldn't do it, any how. He's a bad one when he's roused, and that feller Pittston, who I hate, and him, has got some rough fellers that'll do anything they tell them. You've got 'em both down on you. What they will do or can do I don't know, but you want to look out and be careful. I don't know just what they mean by dosin' a man, but I do know that in Chicago they talked about dosin' a man one night, and after that he was found on the street nearly dead."

"What does Langdon do for a living?"

"He don't do nothing. He's got money of his own."

"Do you know that?"

"I know he aint never done nothin', aint never done no work, and yet he has all the money he wants. He don't stint me."

"Where did you marry him?"

"In Chicago. My folks were agin him. My father is a policeman there, and said he was nothin' but a gambler. He wasn't, though. I ran away

with him, and father thought I wasn't married to him first, but afterwards he knew better, although I came to know that his name wasn't always Langdon."

"What was it!" asked Dorison.

"I never heard," said the woman shortly.

"Is he as flush of money as he always was!" asked Dorison.

"I aint seen no difference," replied the woman; "but don't you think I've done enough when I warn you of danger, without askin' me to give him away?"

Dorison answered laughing:

"Before I ask you to give him away I must know there is something to give away. However, I am much obliged for your kindness. I will be careful, though I don't know what he can do. Do you know what I've done to him?"

"Only he says you are interfering in his affairs. I heard him say you followed Pittston into a restaurant, and did it because a Chicago detective named Cathcart told you to. And he said that if you wasn't a swell in town he'd think you was a detective."

Dorison laughed at the idea, and further asked:

"Do you know what I did to him last night that made him angry?"

"No."

"I prevented him from speaking to a young lady who didn't want to be noticed by him?"

"I know—a Miss Eustace. I've heard him curse

the family and say he knew a way to pull 'em down in time."

A malicious thought popped into Dorison's head.

"Do you know what he proposes to do?"

"No."

"I do."

"What?"

"I'm afraid you will get angry with me and make a row."

"No, I wont," she said, with breathless interest.

"He wants to marry the youngest Miss Eustace, and has tried to get her to run away with him."

Dorison was fairly frightened at the effect of his words.

The black eyes of the woman flashed fire, and her strong, handsome face became hideously convulsed with an anger that seemed to be ungovernable.

"You are not lying to me," she hissed.

"Now be calm. You promised not to make a row. I shall not say another word until you are composed."

The girl made a desperate effort to regain control of herself, and while she was doing so they walked some distance in silence.

"Tell me all you know," she said at length. "I will be quiet."

"Who is Dr. Fassett?" he asked.

"He's a doctor that used to come to see Harry every morning. I don't know anything about him, except he used to have a close talk with him, but

about what I don't know. Harry's got some hold on him. Why do you ask?"

"He is the family physician of the Eustace people, and introduced Langdon there. He tried to make the younger daughter like Langdon, and arranged meetings alone with Langdon. The brother, young Eustace, told me of this, and that ever since they found it out they have kept so close a watch on the younger daughter that she can't see him at all. But he is still hanging around."

The girl's struggle with her passion was something pathetic.

"That's what he's tryin' to make people believe I'm not his wife for, then," she gasped.

"Do you think so much of him?" he asked.

"Does any wife want to see her husband run after another woman?"

"I presume not, but he'll never run away with her?"

"No, he never will," said the girl, with frightful emphasis.

"Who is Pittston?" he asked.

"I don't know. He's a feller of good family in Chicago. Harry knew him there. He's crooked, I think. Hang it, sometimes I think Harry is, but I don't know. They never tell me anything. Harry laughed one day and said I was too d——d honest to tell anything to. They've got some ugly fellers about 'em, and you look out for 'em."

"I will look out. But what will you do? Tell Harry what I've told you?"

"I'll tell him nothing. Don't you fear. But he'll never run away and marry anybody. I'll see this girl and make her know I'm his wife. I must get back now, or I'll be missed."

The woman slipped down the cross street, and Dorison retraced his steps through Lexington Avenue, deep in thought. After carefully reviewing his talk with the girl he said:

"I presume the first thing to do is to see Cathcart and inform him. The next thing, to see Eustace and tell him. It strikes me that there is a strong weapon in this to use with the young girl. It ought to rid her of any sneaking notion she may have for Langdon."

CHAPTER XVII.

PIECING OUT A STORY.

WHILE Dorison was having the conversation with the woman, as set forth in the previous chapter, Cathcart was laboring over a mass of notes in his own chamber in Bond Street.

"The story is made," he said, as he leaned back in his chair, his hands thrust in his vest-pockets. "Facts are connected by a little effort of the imagination. A little work in confirming the imaginary parts, and if it does not go to pieces, that part of the affair is concluded. If it does, at all events there will be triumph enough in the other part to compensate for all the labor."

"Um," he muttered, as he reached forward, taking up a memorandum. "The records show the house to have been transferred April 22, 1854, by Richard Basselin, for $11,500; a check is given to Richard Basselin, April 22, 1854, a certified check, and endorsed by Richard Basselin, is returned as a voucher. Thus a clear connection is unmistakably traced. Now to put that other conception of mine to the test, and if it should prove to be a correct one the road will be straight to the end."

He took up another pile of notes, and began the work of arranging in accordance with some plan he

carried in his head; finishing which he transferred the contents of each separate slip of paper to a sheet, commenting as he did so in brief sentences: "That fits like a glove." "That is somewhat contradictory." "There is a straight connection." "A screw loose there," and so on.

He was thus engaged when Dorison entered.

"Any new developments?" he asked curtly.

"I have had a rather singular adventure this morning, which I have hastened to tell you."

The old man opened a newspaper lying beside him and spread it over the papers lying on his table.

Having done this to his satisfaction he swung his chair around so that he faced Dorison, and said:

"Tell it to me in detail."

To do this it was necessary to again go back to that evening when Dorison wandered to Twenty-ninth Street and Third Avenue—that evening so fruitful of results. Dorison consumed half an hour in the recital of his adventure, during which Cathcart listened intently, interposing neither word, motion, nor gesture, keeping his keen, bright eyes on Dorison's face.

"You have told it well and clearly," he said as Dorison concluded. "No necessity of going over it again. What you tell is more important than you suppose, I imagine. One part confirms a theory I hardly dared to entertain. You must heed that warning of the woman."

Dorison laughed in derision.

"I give it no importance," he said; "I told it simply as showing why the woman wrote me."

"But you must give it importance," said Cathcart earnestly. "Dosing is a Western term for sandbagging a man. It means something."

"Threatened men live long," laughed Dorison.

The old detective glanced irritably at the young man, saying:

"You are self-sufficient at times, and when you are, you display your ignorance of the ways of the world."

He took up a book of telegraph blanks, and rapidly scribbled a telegram, handing it to Dorison.

"Will you do me the favor of sending that when you leave here. You may read it."

Dorison did so with some interest. It was addressed to a private detective in Chicago:

"Find as soon as possible whether Harry Langdon was ever known by any other name."

Dorison inquired whether the person to whom the dispatch was addressed would know who was meant.

"Very well. I have had previous correspondence on the matter. The officer on Pittston," he continued abruptly, "has been able to find out very little about him. So far as his life is concerned he seems to be engaged in no business—idling his time innocently. It is explained, however by the news you bring me that I was recognized by him. They have suspended whatever business they were up to, until they find out what I'm up to. They evidently

think I'm here on a visit only. One more question and then you must go. Have you seen the elder Eustace yet?"

"No; I have tried to without success."

"Don't do it for several days. Indeed don't meet him at all; avoid him until you see me again."

Wondering what was the reason of this sudden change of policy, Dorison promised.

"I want you to be within call," said the detective. "My impression is that you would do better to keep to your rooms, so that if I want you I can find you without delay."

"Very well."

"Now get away. I've work to do."

As Dorison went out of the room, Cathcart called on some one in an adjoining room. The officer who had shadowed Langdon and Pittston appeared.

"Mr. Dudley is threatened with injury," he said, "by Langdon and Pittston. They won't do it; some one whom they employ will, if it is done at all. I want you to be on his track and see if he is followed. He obstinately refuses to believe in it. I think a disguise will be necessary."

"I can follow him home to-day without one. After that I will 'fake' up something."

"Very well."

So soon as the officer had hurried out after Dorison, Cathcart gathered up his papers on the table and placed them in a wooden box on the floor, which he locked carefully. Donning his topcoat

and taking his hat, he went out, walking to the Bowery. Here he sought a drug-store, and entering, asked permission to look at the directory. Securing the address he desired, he took an upbound Fourth Avenue car.

Arriving at the corner of Fifty-sixth Street he descended and walked in the direction of Fifth Avenue. Near that thoroughfare of fashion and wealth he stopped and ascended the steps of one of the handsomest dwellings of the block.

It was the residence of Herbert Clavering Eustace.

"This is my card," he said to the servant. "But it will convey nothing to Mr. Eustace. Please tell him my call is not a social one, but on business, important business."

He was called into a rear room which Mr. Eustace reserved as his study.

"I have brought you here because we would be free from interruption," said Mr. Eustace. "I am at your service, sir."

Cathcart bent his head a moment as if thinking how to begin his business. Mr. Eustace waited patiently and courteously.

"I am here," said the old detective, "in pursuance of an inquiry I am conducting, and recent developments have suggested to me that you may have much knowledge of the matter."

He lifted his head as he completed his sentence, and regarded Mr. Eustace fixedly.

"Unless I am further informed," replied Mr.

Eustace, smiling, "I shall be unable to tell whether I have the information you desire or not."

"On the 14th day of July, 1871," said Cathcart, ignoring the remark, and proceeding as in continuance of his beginning, "Reuben Dorison died. When found, an unfinished letter was before him. He had been stricken with death in the very act of its composition. To whom it was intended to be addressed never was known, is not known now, but it did a great wrong. It charged some one with the commission of many crimes, to cover which, and to pay the damages of which, had wasted his fortune. He was asking for assistance. By implication, indeed one may say by inference alone, these crimes were charged against his only son, a young man upon whom he had lavished his affection and of whom he had apparently been very fond."

"Ah!" said Mr. Eustace, deeply interested, "I can confirm that."

"The executor and the immediate friends, however, insisted that the letter condemned the son, and indeed employed the police to trace the crimes charged, and the friends of the young man cut him and snubbed him. He strove as frantically to disprove the charges, as the police worked industriously to trace them. Both failed utterly, and the son, at last despairing and wholly miserable, abandoned further effort, left the city and settled in the West. At this late day I am employed in an endeavor to solve the riddle. I am a Western detective."

Mr. Eustace gave a great start, and a look of blank amazement spread over his face. It was as if he had said in words, "You a detective! I never would have believed it. You do not meet my preconception of a detective at all."

"This movement instituted by the young man, after the lapse of eight years, has no other purpose than that of removing from his name the stigma placed upon it by that unfinished letter. He seeks no property, for his father's executors discovered there was no property left."

"No property left?" exclaimed Mr. Eustace. "Why, he had a splendid property."

"Had, yes. But not when he died. Permit me to show you a copy of that unfortunate letter."

He handed Mr. Eustace a sheet of paper which he had taken from his pocket. After it was read Mr. Eustace returned it, saying:

"I was abroad at the time of Mr. Dorison's death, had been for several years, and for two years after. At the exact time I was in the far East upon a special diplomatic mission, and therefore not until my return to Paris, many months afterwards, did I hear of its occurrence. I presume by that time interest in the events surrounding it had subsided, and upon my return to this city was almost all forgotten, and what was remembered was perverted. All that I heard was that the young man had behaved very badly, and had been discarded by his father previous to the father's death; that he had disappeared. I thought it

strange, for the very last letter I had from Reuben Dorison, written some weeks before his death, but received by me many months after it, while speaking of troubles complicating his old age, referred in enthusiastic terms to the comfort and pride he had in his only son."

"You maintained a close intimacy with Mr. Dorison?" asked Cathcart.

"Yes; it could not be closer," replied Mr. Eustace warmly. "At one period of our lives it was sacredly confidential—a confidence which doubtless would have made me familiar with every event in his life, and him with that in mine, had not a long separation, by which we could not meet, except at the intervals of years, and then only briefly, occurred. Upon my side there was absolutely no reservation so long as it continued."

"He did you essential service at one time?"

"He did indeed."

"Saved you from ruin by taking charge of your estate, which you had endangered by extravagance and recklessness of life, lending the aid of his finances and credit?"

The face of Mr. Eustace flushed deeply, and he looked with no little anger upon the calm and immobile face of the detective.

"It is true, sir," he replied with his stateliest manner, "but how you came to know it I cannot tell."

"I have finally won Mr. Dorison's executor to a belief in the innocence of the son. He has given me access to all of the papers of the estate."

"You are at no pains to make your words gentle," said Mr. Eustace, with much dignity.

"I am a surgeon with a probe. I cannot expect to escape inflicting pain. Justice, delayed eight years, demands the truth at all cost. I have read you very inaccurately if I am mistaken in assuming you to be a man of strict honor, high regard for justice, and a deep sense of the obligation a man owes another in distress."

Mr. Eustace colored under the flattering estimate of his character.

"I asked the question from no idle curiosity, nor from a desire to inflict pain, but in order to confirm a theory I had formed as to the relations existing between you and Mr. Dorison. Such confidence and reliance as you gave him begets a return. It is knowledge of Mr. Dorison's life I want, not of yours. Now, sir, up to this time you have accepted me on the strength of my own statement as to what I am. I am about to ask you questions which you should not answer a stranger or one having no reasonable right to ask them. Do me the favor to examine my credentials."

He handed Mr. Eustace a package of papers he drew from an inner pocket, and lay back in his chair patiently awaiting their examination.

In time Mr. Eustace returned them.

"I am satisfied, sir; some of them credit you with great eminence in your profession."

"I have done some good work in my time,"

replied Cathcart indifferently. "If you are satisfied as to my identity, we will proceed."

Mr. Eustace was evidently greatly impressed with his visitor, and yielded to him as most men did.

"I apprehend," said Cathcart, "that we will make greater progress if I submit my theory to you and try to see whether we can erect it into a certainty. You will perceive in that unfinished letter a direct reference is made to a son. The writer seems to be borne down by the fact that all the evils he has recited are to be attributed to an ungrateful son. Now, inasmuch as he had but one son, the superficial and perhaps natural supposition would be that that son was referred to. But we are immediately confronted with the fact that nothing in the life of the young man can be found to justify the charges. Upon the contrary, we find abundant evidence that that son was treated with confidence, pride, affection, and generosity, which the son repaid with an affection and attention quite as strong. This certainly is contradictory. But if further evidence is wanted it is to be found in the almost frantic endeavors of the young man himself to disprove the charges—endeavors ill-directed and ill-advised, as might be expected in a boy only twenty-three—throwing himself open to the most rigid examination, and, further, that after having brooded on these troubles for eight years, he has set the inquiry on foot again. Those who are inclined to look leniently on the young man, say that the elder Dorison must have been stricken with an

insanity which was a precursor of his death, or, that if he had been permitted to finish the letter it would have been found that he would have qualified the charges. Others, and by far the majority, including the long and clear-headed men of the police, insist that the charges are direct and unequivocal. I disagree with all."

Mr. Eustace, who had been sitting in his easy-chair, with his elbow resting upon the arm, supporting his chin, straightened up and looked with rising color upon the old detective.

"You will notice," continued Cathcart, taking out the copy of the unfinished letter, "that in the reference to this son he uses the term, 'an ungrateful son,' not my ungrateful son, nor the ungrateful son of my heart, or life, or old age, as men often speak. He uses the indefinite article, 'an,—"

"And you reason there was another son," interrupted Mr. Eustace, excitedly.

"I do," replied Cathcart firmly,—"an illegitimate son. Therefore, believing that to be so, and knowing the relations existing between you and Mr. Dorison, I am come to know whether you have anything in your possession—any knowledge—which justifies such a theory?"

Mr. Eustace rose from his chair impulsively, and rapidly walked up and down the apartment with long strides, evidently much agitated.

"You are touching upon sacred confidences," said Mr. Eustace finally, "I do not know—"

"One moment," interrupted the old detective

hastily; "I am not without knowledge that the elder Dorison had some relation with a woman,—just what it was I do not know, but his portrait, his seal ring, and parts of letters written by him were found in her apartments. But stronger than all is this: For a number of years, that is to say for twenty-five years, this woman occupied a house down town, the title to which was vested in her name. This property was transferred to her April 22, 1854, by Richard Basselin, the consideration being $11,500. I find among the papers of the Dorison estate a voucher, a check drawn on the Chemical Bank for $11,500, in favor of Richard Basselin, dated April 22, 1854, signed by Reuben Dorison, certified by the cashier on that day, and endorsed by Richard Basselin. Subsequently Richard Basselin removed to Buffalo, where he died a little more than a year ago. You perceive that a connection is established. The nature of that connection is what I now desire to ascertain."

Mr. Eustace had stopped in front of Cathcart as the latter talked. He asked suddenly:

"The name of that woman?"

"I prefer to follow my own plan of inquiry and endeavor to elicit information before disclosing it. I have no objection to giving it and will do so before I leave. The important thing is not to satisfy your curiosity but to justify my theory."

Mr. Eustace turned an irritable glance upon the old man, sitting so calm and imperturbable at his fireside. He resumed his walk.

"I have some information, no doubt, that will assist you. What you are telling me is wholly new. The question in my mind is whether I should tell that which was given me under the solemn seal of secrecy."

"Have you the right to obstruct the search of a young man leading to the restoration of his good name? I appeal to you as a man of justice. I appeal also to your recollection of Reuben Dorison, and ask if it were possible for him to appear here for one moment, whether he would refuse you permission to unlock your lips, when the doing of it would tend to remove the disgrace from a son he thought so much of, as you have yourself testified. Finally, I say to you, not in the way of a threat, but as a simple statement of fact, that there is another phase of this case, that sooner or later the officers of the law must take hold of, where you will be summoned to tell all you know, unless you evade it by telling me now."

All of this increased the agitation of Mr. Eustace, and he said:

"The strongest appeal is the one to my memory of Reuben Dorison. I think you are right there."

He sat himself down in his easy-chair, and looked into the fire burning brightly in the grate a long time.

Cathcart sat silently by, but presenting a firm attitude of irresistible pertinacity in his determination to get the story.

"I have a strang tale to tell," finally began Mr.

Eustace, "and yet only the outlines of it. When Reuben Dorison was a young man, subsequent to his father's death, perhaps then twenty-two or three years old, before he was married to Mary Clavering, a distant relative of mine, he met and fell in love with a beautiful young girl, in a rank of life much lower than his own. Where he met her or how, I never learned, but her father was a costumer to one of the theaters of that day, and had a shop in Chatham Street. She returned that love and they desired to marry. Her father, however, for reasons he would not give, refused his consent, grew violent when it was talked of, and finally put her away so effectually that Dorison could learn nothing of her. When next he heard of her, she was married, and to a man at the command of her father. This story I had from his lips. I cannot recollect that I ever heard her last name, or that of the man she married. In speaking to her he called her Emma. Dorison's mother was bent on his marrying Mary Clavering, and in time brought about the match. Dorison must have become reconciled to it," continued Mr. Eustace, musingly, more to himself than to Cathcart, "for in those days he seemed very happy, and his home in Bleecker Street was as pleasant and gay as any in the city. He was exceedingly prosperous in business, and the only cloud I could see dimming his happiness was the death of four children, leaving him only one, the youngest, a boy. In 1851, Dorison moved from Bleecker Street to Twenty-third Street, and a

year later his wife died, the boy then being four or five years old."

Mr. Eustace got up and going to his desk took from a pigeon-hole a little book. Turning over its leaves he examined a page of it attentively, and returned.

"I am correct in my recollection. One afternoon, three years after the death of his wife, he came to me in deep distress, saying he must relieve his feelings by talking with some one he could trust. He said that two years previously he had met his early love, and discovered that she was a widow—that her husband had treated her ill all his life, and had several years previously gone to another part of the country, contributing sufficiently to her support to escape charges of abandonment; that she had had advices of his death, by letter, from one of his companions who had sent her his private papers; and that she was childless; that he found his love for her returned, and in haste and without considering consequences had married her. For reasons which he did not give me, he said he determined he would not make the marriage known until he could carry out successfully his retirement from business, and permanently invest his property. So he had rented a house and was providing for her as a husband should, but still keeping the fact of the marriage secret. He had retired and was about ready to announce his second marriage, two children having been born to them in the meantime, when the first husband presented himself alive and in person.

Though Dorison had been compelled to pay heavily to prevent the husband from making a scandal, from prosecuting his wife for bigamy and to go his way and leave her in peace, the fact remained that she was not his wife, and could not be recognized as such. Though he was the father of her children, he said the woman insisted on an absolute severance of their relations. She said they had sinned, but sinned innocently, and that they could repair their wrong only by separation. He had tried to combat her resolution, but she was immovable, and he was almost heartbroken, saying his love for her was never so great as when she had shown such nobility of soul; that she should be surrounded by every comfort, and that her protection should be his care. Again he refrained from the mention of names, and handing me securities to the amount of fifty thousand dollars, asked me to hypothecate them on a long term.''

''My theory is confirmed,'' said Cathcart. ''Did he ever refer to it again?''

''No,'' replied Eustace, ''except once in answer to a question, when he said that affairs had settled into a sad and quiet rut and he avoided thought of it as much as possible. Not long after this affair occurred my own financial troubles, and after they had been straightened out, upon which he labored much, I went abroad in the diplomatic service. While our warm friendship was never broken, our confidences, by the fact of separation only, ceased.''

"Um," said the detective, "Is that all you have to say?"

"No. One more point. In 1869 I returned from the continent on a short visit, leaving my family behind me. The night before I was to return, Dorison came to me, begging to be excused for troubling me at such an hour and time on such a matter. He said he was in great trouble, the causes of which were too many and involved too long a story in explanation to give them. He had with him a small tin case in which were contained one hundred and fifty thousand dollars of government securities, which he said he desired me to retain, subject to his order, the reason for which he would give me some time. He had a receipt prepared simply reading: 'Received from Reuben Dorison government securities to the amount of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars,' which he asked me to sign, and I did. 'I am preparing,' he said, 'for a storm. You know the unfortunate affair I became involved in. This is intended to be some reparation to the children whose paternity I am compelled to deny—one child perhaps it were better to say. In view of the fact that Emma's first husband is yet alive and makes demands on her, I don't think it wise to hand them to her yet. In view of certain demands on me, of matters occurring and likely to occur in the future, they were better out of my hands. I can think of no better place than to put them in the hands of a friend I trust as I do you. A demand will be made upon

you, sometime. When it is, yield them up only on the presentation of this paper.' He showed me a paper written in red ink, the edges of which were notched. 'Here,' he continued, 'is another piece of paper, blank, which fits into these notches.' I fitted them and saw they compared. He went away. I never saw him after, and I yet have the piece of blank notched paper in my safe. The bonds are in my possession, swollen by interest and compound interest to nearly a quarter of a million of dollars, and no demand has yet been made for them.''

"And never will be," said Cathcart positively.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE STORY PIECED OUT.

MR. EUSTACE was evidently much astonished and impressed by the positive tone of the old detective.

"Why? What do you know?"

The old man ignored the question, but asked another:

"Did you never hear anything more on the subject?"

"Yes. A year later, in a letter to me at Paris, Dorison said that he did not know but events were shaping themselves so that he himself would be compelled to demand a return of these securities, but I never heard more from him on the subject."

"I am inclined to believe," said Cathcart, after some moments of thought, "that that unfinished letter was intended to be addressed to you?"

"To me? Can you mean it?"

"Yes, I do, and the more I think of it the more confirmed I am. See! He gave those bonds in trust for a person whom he protected by not handing them to her, but to you. The necessity for her possession of them did not arise during his life. If he were to approach death, then he meant to give the order to her, but he was carried off without a

moment's warning. But that is not my direction. He knew they were in your hands, recoverable by him at any time. He intimated in one letter to you that he might be compelled to demand possession of them himself. What is that letter you have read but an explanation of the reasons why he wanted them? Had he been permitted to finish that letter, he would have wound up with a demand for their return, and for further assistance from you."

"And he should have had it," said Mr. Eustace fervently. "I owe everything to him."

"I see it clearly now. He had hypothecated all of his securties. They were in danger of lapsing. He wanted the proceeds of these bonds and your assistance to redeem them. His real estate was mortgaged to its full value; his other means were exhausted, and so, without the aid of those bonds and your assistance, he could not redeem the pledged securities. By his sudden death they did lapse into the hands of those who had advanced him money."

"But what did he do with all the money he raised?" asked Mr. Eustace, bewildered and astonished.

"He tells you in that unfinished letter. You ask me how I know no demand will ever be made upon you. I will tell you, and in doing so will piece out the tale you told me. First, there is no one to make the demand. They are dead. The woman Mr. Dorison married only to find she could not be his wife, was Mrs. Emma Farish, living at No.— East Sixteenth Street; the two children of which

Mr. Dorison was the father were a boy and a girl. The girl's name was Anne; the boy's name I believe to have been Harold,—of that I am not quite certain."

"How long have you known this?" asked Mr. Eustace, in open astonishment.

"Since you told me your tale."

"I cannot comprehend."

"Possibly not. I have been studying, searching, delving, dreaming and working on this case for two months, and I have only just comprehended it."

"Then these bonds which Dorison intended for this woman, should, if her identity be established, go to her?"

"That is impossible."

"Why, indeed?"

"She is dead; so is her daughter."

"Oh."

"Have you forgotten the Farish murder?"

"Great heavens! Are those the people—were they the victims of that horrible butchery?"

"The same. Now see how marvelously the affairs of this life are adjusted. I am employed by the younger Dorison to endeavor to explain the riddle of that letter, which has covered him with disgrace. These murders are committed, and I am solicited by the police authorities to hunt the murderer or murderers down. I have two cases on my hands as widely separated, you would say, as they well could be. I take my first step. In the room where the daughter is killed a portrait of Mr.

Dorison and his seal ring are found, and in one of the hands of the murdered girl a scrap of paper torn from a letter; another on the floor. They are both in the handwriting of the elder Dorison. My first determination is what? Why, I have not two cases on hand but one—to reveal the mystery of one is to reveal the mystery of the other. How shall you account for these things? A man in a Western city sets me at work in New York in a case concerning him alone, and coming here with some reputation, the police employ me on the murder, and lo! they are in effect the same case."

"The ways of Providence are past finding out," said Mr. Eustace solemnly, aghast at the information forced upon him. "But where is the son?" he asked, suddenly and eagerly.

"I don't know," replied Cathcart. "He disappeared from his home when about eighteen, and, I should say, mysteriously."

"Oh!" said Mr. Eustace, cast into profound thought by the answer.

"I am quite certain," said Cathcart, "that those murders had their origin in an endeavor—— Phew—"

The old man leaped to his feet with a long, low whistle, and thrusting his hands into his vest-pockets, began treading the floor rapidly, saying to himself, "Let me think! Let me think! Ho, ho! let me think! Ho, ho! let me think!"

Mr. Eustace, startled by the abruptness of Cathcart, began to ask him questions, but the old

detective waved him to silence with an imperious gesture. Thus he continued to tramp for fully ten minutes. Then he resumed his seat.

"Now listen," he said, bending forward earnestly. "Inquiry has determined that the murders were not committed for the sake of robbery, that is, for the sake of obtaining jewels and money, but in order to obtain possession of certain documents. It is clear, apparently, that among those desired documents were letters from Dorison, since we have fragments torn from them in a struggle which preceded the murder of the daughter. But this murder of the daughter, from whom those letters were wrested, did not yield what was wanted, and so the mother was killed and something torn from her breast, where she had concealed it. What was desired? The order for the bonds of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars in your hands, the existence of which the murderer had knowledge of, and of the way to obtain them? And as Dorison talks of defalcations and forgeries committed by a son, were evidences of those forgeries, existence of which were a menace to the wrong-doer, in possession of the woman? Were these the things wanted?"

"And was the son who so mysteriously disappeared, and who was charged with these crimes, the murderer?" shouted Mr. Eustace, excited and losing his habitual control.

"Eh, eh, eh, eh!" cried Cathcart with eager exclamations, as if he were urging on the chase after an idea.

"It must be so!" cried Mr. Eustace. "It must be so!"

"Softly, softly!" said the old detective, putting a curb upon himself. "There are other things. There was a glove—By Heaven!" he almost shouted, as he again leaped to his feet with his hands in his vest-pockets, repeating his tramping up and down. "Oh, my heavens! this will never do. Could *he* have known of these bonds and wanted to get the people out of the way so he could seize them—"

He turned short upon Mr. Eustace, who was staring at him, unable to follow his words understandingly.

"Have you ever told any one you had these bonds?"

"Never a soul."

"Are you certain? This question means a great deal."

"No one knows that I hold the bonds given me by Reuben Dorison, except you."

"You have never written about them or made a memorandum likely to come to the eyes of another person?"

"No. I wrote a statement of how they came into my hands, with instructions that they must be held by my executors subject to the order spoken of by Dorison, but that statement was by me placed with my will as soon as completed and under seal immediately. The seal has never been broken."

"I hope not. I hope not," said Cathcart.

"What is this that excites you now?"

"Nothing that I can tell *you* until I know more. If I were to speak now I might heedlessly do a great wrong. Good-afternoon. You will hear from me again."

"Stop one moment, Mr. Cathcart," cried Mr. Eustace. "There is a point I have been trying to speak of for some time."

"Ah! What is that?" said Cathcart, coming back to the fireplace.

"Some time ago my daughter was nearly run over on Broadway and was saved by a young gentleman, who acted exceedingly well in the matter. I called upon him to make my acknowledgments of his service, and was startled by his extraordinary resemblance to Dorison when he was of the age the young man is now."

"Ah!" said Cathcart aloud, but to himself he added, "our young friend enters."

"He denied relationship to Dorison when I spoke of it. I have met him several times since, and indeed have entertained him at dinner, for he and my son have become quite intimate. At this dinner I referred to this resemblance again, and I saw that he was making efforts to evade the conversation, in fact, everything leading to a discussion of his antecedents. Suddenly the idea occurred to me that this young man might be one of Dorison's illegitimate children. He gives his name as Dudley."

"Ah!" said Cathcart gravely. "I will look into this."

"You will have no difficulty in finding him. He moves about a good deal. His apartments are in Twenty-ninth Street."

"What number!" asked Cathcart, with an interested expression in his face.

"I have forgotten, but will send it you, after obtaining it from my son."

"That is unnecessary. What streets is it between?"

"Broadway and Fifth Avenue."

"That is all that is necessary."

"So satisfied was I that this young man was playing a part, that I strenuously objected to his being received here as a friend of the house longer, and tried to prevent his acting as an escort to one of my daughters to a theater party my son gave. But as that would have necessitated the withdrawal of invitations, I yielded in this instance, upon the understanding that he was not to be encouraged further."

"That was proper—very proper. Did you give your reasons?"

"No; I could not, without telling more than I would."

"I see. You have had trouble with a man Langdon, have you not?"

"Well, we have been annoyed by a man of that name."

"Very true! Seriously annoyed. Annoyed by his forced attentions to one of your daughters."

"Upon my word, Mr. Cathcart, I hardly know

which to admire most—the directness of your speech or the scope of your information."

"Don't be annoyed, sir. I mean only to do you a service. The fellow is a scamp. He is married. He has a wife. Any time you want me to convince your daughter of that I will do it, so there will be no question concerning it."

Leaving Mr. Eustace dumfounded by his knowledge of what was supposed to be a family secret, and yet appreciative of the value of the service proffered, Cathcart caught his hat and moved quickly to the door.

He was back again in a moment.

"I take it, Mr. Eustace, you see the necessity of keeping these developments of to-day strictly a secret, not to be talked about. Devotion to the memory of your dead friend would demand this, even if justice did not."

"I think I understand my position," said Mr. Eustace, loftily.

This time the old detective slipped out of the door and was gone, leaving Mr. Eustace agitated and excited, feeling very much as if he had been caught up in a whirlwind, and after many confusing gyrations, set down where he had been taken up.

CHAPTER XIX.

EUSTACE IN THE TOILS.

LEAVING the Eustace mansion, the old detective walked hastily to Broadway, where he hailed a cab and ordered that he be driven rapidly to Twenty-ninth Street, to Dorison's apartments. Here he handed a note to the janitor, requesting that it be delivered at once to Mr. Dudley.

From thence he was driven to his own apartments in Bond Street, where he dismissed the cab.

A moment later a man with a black beard and bushy black hair left the house. Had he been followed, it would have been found that he made his way straight to Police Headquarters and into the office of Captain Lawton.

Ten minutes after the officer, who was now constantly in attendance upon Cathcart, left the house and hurried to Broadway.

In the meam time Dudley had received Cathcart's note and read it. It ran:

"It is as plain as a pikestaff. There was another son. I have it all in my hands. Come and see me this evening."

"Is the old man drunk or has he gone crazy?" exclaimed Dorison, bewildered, as he read the

words: "What is as plain as a pikestaff? If there was another son who was his father? What is the old imbecile talking about?"

After a vain endeavor to arrive at a meaning of the strange epistle, and gathering as the only intelligence that the old detective desired to see him in the evening, he resumed his reading the delivery of the note had interrupted.

From this occupation, three hours later, he was aroused by the entrance of young Eustace, who, throwing his hat lightly upon a table and drawing off his gloves, walked up to where Dorison was seated.

"Look at me," he said. "Gaze upon me with thine eagle eye."

Dorison perceived that Eustace was not a little excited and irritated. He looked at him inquiringly without rising.

"Please get up," continued Eustace, "and examine my bump of combativeness and destructiveness and see whether they are abnormally developed. Look at the top of my head and see whether there is a general depression where the moral faculties should lift it dome like. Peer into my eyes and observe whether they emit baleful gleams. Consider my jaw and determine whether it is square, angular, and cruel. Are my lips thin? Do I smile a spasmodic smile, mirthless and mechanical? And when I do smile does my mustache go up and my nose come down? Answer me, most potent and grave, would you from an hundred

men, good and true, pick me out for a butcherous murderer?''

Dorison's heart gave a great leap into his throat, and falling back pounded at his ribs. It was only by a supreme effort he could control himself and reply as he desired.

''What do you mean by such rodomontade?'' he asked, assuming a vexed pleasantry.

''Mean?'' replied Eustace severely. ''I mean the distinguished honor has been done your friend, by the intelligent police of our city, of entertaining the idea of the possibility of his having committed the Farish murders.''

''For Heaven's sake!'' cried Dorison, seriously alarmed and much agitated. ''What can you mean? Tell me.''

''I hardly know whether to be mad as blazes or to laugh consumedly,'' replied Eustace, drawing a chair in front of Dorison and seating himself. ''Here is the woful tale. This afternoon about three o'clock I was sailing down Fifth Avenue, in all the pride of my pomp and power, felicitating myself upon the havoc I was making in all the female hearts I met, when a man, with a high, long thin nose, between two ferret-like eyes, stepped up to me, with smooth, catlike movements, and said:

'' 'Mr. Charles Eustace, I believe.'

''Assuring him, with that distinguished grace which is so peculiarly my own, that the expression of his belief did not do injustice to the fact, with

less elegance than precision of speech, he informed me 'I was wanted.' "

"Not at that time having had the inestimable privilege of association with those gentlemen who, for a yearly consideration, undertake to guard our persons and possessions and to protect our morals I enjoyed later, I was unacquainted with the peculiar meaning they attach to simple words of our language, and so I said, 'What?' my tone being a happy blending of surprise and perplexity."

" 'You're wanted,' he repeated.

" 'My friend,' I remarked sweetly, 'there is a charming insufficiency in your information. By whom am I wanted and what for?'

" 'They want you at Police Headquarters,' replied the mysterious one.

" 'Who wants me at Police Headquarters," asked I.

" 'Captain Lawton, the head detective,' he replied with a grin.

" 'For Heaven's sake,' I cried, as light broke upon me, 'what have I been doing?'

" 'Blest if I know, if you don't,' replied he of the grin. 'They want you at once. They sent me to take you.'

" 'I'm taken then, am I?' I asked.

" 'You be,' he replied briefly, but positively and ungramatically.

" 'Are you bound to carry me?' I inquired innocently.

"'Not if you will ride in the street-car,' replied he of the grin.

"'Then lead on, I'll follow.'"

"For heaven's sake!" broke in Dorison, "Get on to something important. You torture me."

"Do not interfere with my recital," replied Eustace. "I am giving this wondrous tale in my best realistic vein. Well, to pursue. We entered the street-car, and as we were borne rapidly over the bounding pavement—note the neatness of that—I devoted myself to a review of the evil deeds of my life. It is astonishing how pure and harmless that life appeared when put to the test of a calm review in a street-car on the way to Police Headquarters. I pledge you my word the only crime I could honestly charge up against myself, was the surreptitious and felonious purloining of a vagrant peanut from the stall of a child of sunny Italy, who took his pay in hurling maledictions after me in choice Tuscan."

"Oh, do not delay so!" cried Dorison, burning with impatience and most eager for the outcome.

"Well, then, if you are not satisfied to listen to a minute analysis of my emotions, I will say that in due course of time we arrived at the Palace of Public Protection in Mulberry Street, where, with great *éclat* and pomp, I was ushered into a luxuriously-furnished apartment by my taking guide, who immediately disappeared. In a moment I found I was in the presence of two persons. One—a rather fine-looking man, who sat in a chair at a desk,

regarding me austerely ; the other—a middle-aged, stout gentleman of medium height, with black beard and bushy black hair, whom I recollect to have seen dining in the Hoffman House café the night I had the honor of first making your acquaintance."

"Cathcart in disguise," muttered Dorison, under his breath.

"On that night he attracted my attention by reason of his keeping his black, beady eyes upon me during the whole dinner, the reason whereof was made plain to me in the subsequent proceedings.

"'Good afternoon, Mr. Eustace,' said the gentleman at the desk.

"'Good afternoon,' I returned courteously, adding, 'I am here because of a pressing invitation to call on Captain Lawton—I presume you are Captain Lawton. I am at loss for its reason, for I can confess to but one crime, after a careful review of my life, and that is the felonious theft of a peanut yesterday morning. I would make restitution, but the sad fact is, and I freely confess it, I have eaten it.'

"The Captain, with just the *soupçon* of a merry twinkle in his eye, replied :

"'Perhaps when the business upon which you are brought here is made known, you will not show such levity.'

"Receiving this rebuke as best I could, I pulled myself into a corresponding serious expression and

calmly awaited developments, taking a chair uninvited in the mean time, and assuming one of my favorite poses of grace and elegance.

"Reaching forward over his desk, the Captain removed a newspaper and took in his hand a plate with glass over it. Under the glass seemed to be a cheap fan, and on the fan something I could not in the light then make out. He handed it to me, saying :

"'Do you recognize that?'

"Imagine my surprise when I found carefully preserved under that glass one of my own gloves. I was so astonished I could not reply for a moment, and the while as I looked at it, both these kindly gentlemen bored holes into my face with their sharp eyes.

"'That, I take,' said I, when I could recover from my astonishment, 'to be one of my own gloves. I am aware that it is not a common glove—that there is a peculiar elegance about it, rarely achieved—but why the eminent Captain Lawton should preserve it so carefully under a glass, and a bell glass at that, I am at a loss to determine.'

"'You are very frank,' sternly said the Captain. 'Do you know where that was found?'

"'I do not,' I replied as calmly as I could, but in reality trembling in the most minute fiber of my body, while visions of wrathful and murderously-inclined husbands and lovers swarmed upon me, and the suspicion that Mr. Blackbeard was one of them, presented horrible consequences.

"'Near to,' said the Captain impressively, 'and under the murdered body of Mrs. Farish.'

"'Oh dear,' I ejaculated weakly, for I was unable to recall the lady. 'How did you get it there? Who did you say?'

"'Mrs. Farish.'

"'Madame Delamour,' grunted Mr. Blackbeard.

"'Oh, the costumer,' I cried, my wits in operation under the suggestion.

"'Ah, you do know her then,' said the Captain. 'Now, how did that happen to be there?'

"'Upon my word, I don't know,' I replied, innocently but truthfully, 'unless I dropped it on the floor the night I called upon her.'

"'You did call upon her, did you?' said the Captain eagerly. 'Now, be very careful in what you say.'

"A little astonished, I said in return:

"'Perhaps you will kindly tell me what you two amiable gentlemen are driving at?'

"'Mrs. Farish was murdered,' answered the Captain, with owlish solemnity. 'Her body was found ten or twelve hours after the deed was done. Upon the floor near the body was found this glove. Since inquiry has determined that Mrs. Farish received only one male visitor, it became necessary to find out to whom this glove belonged. It was found to be yours. With this explanation, perhaps you can see that it became necessary for us to send for you, to explain its presence at that place at that time?'

"To say I was taken aback is perhaps unnecessary. For a moment I was stunned. I failed utterly to perceive the humor of the situation.

"'And you suppose I committed that murder,' I blurted out.

"'We charge nothing. We give you an opportunity to explain the presence of that glove at that place at that particular time.'

"The wild absurdity of the idea finally broke upon me, and I 'larfed a larf' of blended mirth, contempt, and annoyance.

"'Gentlemen,' I said, 'you will be compelled to call in your dogs and send them on another scent. Tell me, when did this murder occur?'

"'On the fifth day of last October,' replied the Captain.

"I took from my pocket my memorandum-book, and turning to the page of that date I said:

"'Yes, I called upon Mrs. Farish at No. ——— East Sixteenth Street on the night of that day. However, she was alive and well when I went there, and she was alive and well when I left her.'

"The two gentlemen exchanged looks after this crushing blow, and appeared to be somewhat mixed, so to speak. I politely and magnanimously waited for them to recover from the effects of the blow.

"'What was your business there?' asked Mr. Blackbeard.

"'Charity,' I promptly replied—'charity on both ends. I went to see her about costumes.'

"'But that was not her place of business,' persisted Mr. Blackbeard.

"'True,' I replied, 'but if you will bear with me I will tell in detail how I came to go there. Last October Mrs. Bushnell, a lady of charitable inclinations, was interested in an uptown hospital, for the aid of which an entertainment, of which tableaux were to be a feature, was proposed. As I had had some experience in those things, I was asked to take charge. In the management of this affair I called upon Mr. Newton, a real estate broker, to ask that his daughter might participate. During our conversation he asked if I had engaged costumes, and learning I had not, said he was greatly interested in a person who had just rented apartments in a house in Bleecker Street, of which he had charge, in which to conduct a costumer's business. He imagined, he said, she was in want of assistance in starting. And, if I could do as well with her, he would like me to see her and give her the business. But, he added, that he did not believe she was fairly open for business yet, and that, though Madame Delamour was her business name, I could find her as Mrs. Farish at No. —— East Sixteenth Street. Willing to oblige him, I went that evening to see her. I did not do any business with her, however, for finding out what I wanted and how soon, she thought her business was not far enough advanced to undertake so large an order to be filled in so short a time. So I left her, and, as it appears, my glove also.'

"'Had you ever known her before?' asked Mr. Blackbeard.

"'No, sir,' I replied, as respectfully as two peas.

"'Never had heard of her?' he persisted.

"'Never knew such a person existed until Mr. Newton talked of her,' I replied.

"'Did you not read of her being murdered,'' again asked Mr. Blackbeard.

"'Oh yes,' was my reply.

"'Why didn't you speak of it then?' he demanded.

"'I did in my family,' I answered.

"'To your father,' he suggested.

"'Perhaps. I spoke of it at the table, but whether my father was present or not I do not recollect. My talk was with my mother and sisters?'

"'Um,' grunted Mr. Blackbeard. 'Why didn't you speak to the authorities about it?'

"'Why should I?' asked I in return. 'I couldn't contribute anything to the general or special information, and my name was not mentioned in connection with the affair.'

"'You had lost your glove there,' persisted Mr. Blackbeard! 'Were you not afraid you would be charged with the murder?'

"'In the first place!' I returned, 'I did not know I had lost a glove there. In the second place, not being engaged in murder as a fine art, or as a trade, it did not occur to me that any one would charge me with it.'

"That delicate and entirely ingenious reference

to De Quincy was a settler for Mr. Blackbeard. The Captain came at me then:

"'You have studied surgery, haven't you?'

"'Well, I have pretended to'—thus me, most modestly.

"'Mrs. Farish was killed by one who knew how to reach the carotid artery with a lancet and with great precision,' he suggested, and I thought maliciously.

"'I never reached a carotid artery with a lancet or precision, or with any other kind of an instrument.'

"That brilliant witticism was lost upon them, for neither even smiled.

"'It is as I expected,' said Mr. Blackbeard. 'Ever since suspicion was directed toward him, I have not doubted he could explain the glove business.'

"This was addressed to the Captain in so lugubrious a tone that my sympathies were excited. So I said:

"'Sir, I greatly grieve to have been the cause of such disappointment. The next time I lose a glove, where a woman may fall upon it, so as not to grieve you, I will engage in the gentle pastime of assassination.'

"At this the Captain laughed outright, and we all became quite merry. After which he said:

"'I think you have satisfactorily explained your connection with the case. You ought not to wonder at our wanting to see you, in view of finding your glove there.'

"'What time did you call on Mrs. Farish?' inquired Mr. Blackbeard, by this time having recovered from my settler.

"'I should think at about half-past eight,' I answered, holding no malice against him.

"'Was her daughter with her?'

"'Her daughter,' I repeated. 'No, I saw her alone. And now that I recollect, she said she wished her daughter would come in, not alone because she wanted to consult her as to the possibility of undertaking my work, but because she was worried over her delay in returning from business.'

"'Um,' grunted Mr. Blackbeard. 'It is as I supposed. Her daughter was killed first.' Then to me, 'You have no other incident to give us?'

"'None!' I replied.

Whereupon the Captain, rising and giving me his hand, said:

"'We will detain you no longer.'

"So, after exchanging our distinguished considerations, as became dignitaries, I went out into the free air-r a free ma-an.

"With the end of this o'er true tale," concluded Eustace, "comes this reflective inquiry—how the deuce did they discover that glove to be mine?"

Dorison had listened to Eustace intently and with varying emotions. It was with difficulty he could prevent expressing exuberant satisfaction over the outcome. He was inexpressibly glad that the test Eustace had been subjected to had ended as it had—that is to say, in a triumphant clearance of Eustace.

He made no doubt of it, and as he thought then he did not believe he had ever judged Eustace to be anything but innocent. As it was, he said warmly, he was glad it had ended so well, since he had been greatly frightened.

"You take it too seriously, my friend," said Eustace.

"No, I do not," replied Dorison. "But that you were enabled to present names to substantiate your story you might have been in an awkward predicament, with annoying publicity."

"Bless my heart, but I never thought of that," said Eustace. "I think you are right. And I also think it is time to dine. Come with me, and after dinner we'll go to the theater."

"I'll dine with you, but I have a business engagement for this evening," he replied, as he prepared to go out with his friend.

CHAPTER XX.

A MYSTERY REVEALED.

LEAVING young Eustace after dinner, Dorison went at once to the rooms of the old detective. A single glance informed him that the old man was in a happy humor.

"I received a note from you in the early afternoon," said Dorison, "but all of it I could understand was that you desired to see me this evening. And here I am."

"You are not quick of comprehension. I meant your case is as plain as a pikestaff. You had, or have, a brother—the latter I think."

Dorison stared in astonishment at the detective, his anger rising at the same time. However much he had in his own heart condemned his father for the charge which, for eight years, had embittered his life, he was not willing others should cast reflections upon him.

But Cathcart was not a man to regard the emotions of others, and though, doubtless, he quickly enough perceived the anger of the young man, without preface, apology, or effort to soften the news he had given him, he went directly at the statement.

Very soon Dorison's anger was lost in the astonish-

ment the story gave rise to, and when he learned that all this had been obtained from Mr. Eustace, he could not deny that it was conclusive.

"Now," continued Cathcart, "As I say, it is as plain as a pikestaff. I have reasoned the whole thing out to a certain conclusion, my reasoning being based upon information obtained from Mr. Eustace, papers of your father I have had access to, confirming them by public records and the examination of books of private institutions, and that unfinished letter. I shall not waste time by going over the processes, but will give you my conclusions in the shape of a statement:

" When your father was twenty-one or three he met Emma Ludlow, a very pretty girl, daughter of a costumer of Chatham Street. Ludlow was an Englishman who had in his own country been connected with a family of prominence. There drifted to this country one of the younger members of that family, named Farish, who also saw the girl Emma, and desired to marry her. The father felt honored that one of the family he had been a servant in, desired to marry his daughter, and having the notions of parental authority Englishmen entertain, and overlooking the faults of the man Farish, which were so great he was compelled to leave England, opposed your father and forced the marriage with Farish. Subsequently, your father yielded to the wishes of his family and married Mary Clavering, your mother. That marriage was an exceedingly happy one, notwithstanding the previous romance.

Your father and mother had been married twelve years when you were born—the youngest of a family of five, the elder of whom had all died. When you were four, your mother died. A year later your father met Mrs. Farish, then, as he understood, and as she believed, a childless widow. His love returned for her, and he secretly married her. Why, does not yet appear, but his excuse was he was retiring from business and did not want to announce his second marriage until that project was fully accomplished. After two years of this sort of life, during which two children, a boy and girl, were born, Anne and Harold Farish, the husband turned up on the scene, to separate your father and the woman. Mrs. Farish was a good woman, and although Farish, who seems to have been a scamp, was paid well to keep away and make no scandal, his wife insisted upon an absolute severance of relations between your father and herself. In view, however, of all that had happened, your father provided well for her and his children. In 1854 he gave her the house she lived and was murdered in, and fifty thousand dollars, which he invested for her, I suppose.

"The low spirits your father showed at that time were not due to his having retired from business, but to this unfortunate complication. The children grew, and the boy early went wrong. Between the years he was sixteen and nineteen, he committed defalcations and forgeries, the latter principally of your father's name, which indicates that he knew

of his relation to your father, and which were paid by his father and yours, and as well, much more money to save him from punishment—foolishly to be sure, but compelled to it to save the good name of the woman, the mother, if for no other reason. This used up the property. When he died he was appealing to Mr. Eustace for assistance. When he died the scamp Harold disappeared. Three years ago he reappeared again and ruined his mother by his insatiable demands and—''

''And,'' interrupted Dorison excitedly, ''he is Harry Langdon and murdered his mother and sister.''

''Such would seem to be the logical conclusions,'' said the detective calmly.

A thousand questions crowded tumultuously upon the brain of Dorison. He did not know which to ask first—he wanted to ask them all at-once. Finally, he said:

''But do you know all this to be true?''

''No, not in its entirety,'' replied Cathcart. ''Some of it I do know to be true, the rest I sincerely believe. It is now, however, a mere work of time to verify everything. The mystery is solved. The ungrateful son is Harold Farish, *alias* Harry Langdon.''

''But what was the cause of the murder—that was a horrible thing to do,'' asked Dorison.

''There I have proof I think of the accuracy of my theory in the beginning. I said the object of the murders was not robbery, but the possession of

documents of value to somebody. I assume they were proofs of crimes committed, forgeries and the like, which so long as they were held by the mother and sister, were a protection to a certain extent to them, and a menace to him. And perhaps—and we will not quite know until we force the rascal to confession—some one pursuing him was on track of them and he was determined to secure and destroy them, and perhaps, which I think even more probable, one other reason, to obtain an order for a large sum, possession of which would secure possession of the sum, which he thought they held. Of this, however, I will not speak at present for reasons of my own."

"Do you then think the murders were deliberately planned?"

"No. The first, that of the daughter, was unpremeditated, but was done in a moment of exasperation. The second—of the mother—was a consequence of the first, as a matter of self-preservation."

Horrified and much excited, Dorison was silent. His head was in a whirl, and every moment fresh thoughts, each one coming to him as a shock, occurred. The murderer was his half-brother; the beast, Harry Langdon, was his half-brother. The same blood coursed in their veins. The passions and emotions which possessed him he could not stop to analyze, they succeeded each other so rapidly—indeed, became so entangled and exhausted him so with their violence, that he became confused and sick, incapable of thinking clearly; but over all, as a

lambent light, was the thought that his own name was clear and he could walk erect among other men in his own person.

Cathcart was the first to break the silence.

"Your friend, young Eustace, is out of it," he said.

Dorison roused up with something like a start.

"Yes," he said, "he told me. He came straight from you to me."

"Did he know who he had talked with," asked Cathcart anxiously.

"No," replied Dorison, "but I recognized his description of the black-bearded man."

"I do not want him to know that the man to whom his father told that story, and the one who helped to examine him, were the same. I do not want him to know that you ever suspected or watched him."

"He will never know from me. I am far more anxious than you. I cannot look upon that part of the search with anything but self-contempt."

"But I never believed he was in it," said Cathcart.

"Why then," asked Dorison hotly, "did you force me to an intimacy with that idea in view?"

"Because the glove business must be explained, but principally because, early in my search into your part of the affair, I had come upon the intimate relation of the elder Eustace to the elder Dorison, through Cousin Nettleman, and I foresaw then an intimacy with the family would be a necessary thing, and that I might have to use you to elicit the information I wanted. At the time I could not

give you the details, but I had to give you a reason for seeking the intimacy, since you are one of those uncomfortable persons to work with who must have a reason for everything. But your blundering, and the coolness which you permitted to grow up between the elder Eustace and yourself, necessitated my doing the work I intended for you. As it is, I am glad it turned out as it did. You could never have gotten the story."

Agitated and excited as he was, Dorison appreciated the truth of the old man's words.

"You do not know the reason of the old man's coolness to you?"

"No."

"I do."

"What?" asked Dorison eagerly.

"He suspected you to be the son of Dorison by Mrs. Farish."

"Oh!" The possibility of such a thing had not occurred to Dorison.

"But that is no reason why he should treat me coldly, since, as you have told me, he was not then, at least, aware of the bad character of that son."

"There was a stain on the birth of that son of the elder Dorison."

"Even then it should have appeared more as a misfortune than a crime of the parents."

"True, so far as he might have looked upon such a son in the abstract, but as a person whom he had received as an equal into his house, was entertaining as a guest at his own board, and bring-

ing him into associations with his daughters, there was a great difference to a man of his views of life and of his station. He would naturally draw a line on a man of such birth at his own door, commiserating the man for the necessity at the same time."

"True. You are right," replied Dorison thoughtfully.

"I think you ought to appear before the elder Eustace now in your own person."

Dorison was startled at the idea, and shrank from it.

"Are you so certain of your case then?" he asked.

"I am absolutely certain. It is now a mere matter of time to prove it in all its details."

"But will he receive me courteously after having appeared to him under a different name?"

"I have very much misjudged the man, if he is not much interested in the legitimate son of Reuben Dorison, sympathizing greatly with his misfortunes, and anxious by reason of the service rendered him by his father, to actively assist the son of that father."

"Ah!" Yet Dorison was doubtful. He thought Mr. Eustace would be prejudiced against him by reason of his masquerade.

"I think," continued Cathcart, "that Mr. Eustace, with his high social position and his honorable reputation, will be a very great aid to you in the rehabilitation of your name. His friendship and patronage will do more for you than a thousand explanations. Indeed, without the assistance of some such person, explanations will be of little avail. I will write a

letter to him that will make all things straight, which you shall carry to him."

Acting upon the thought immediately, Cathcart turned to his table and began writing.

Dorison sat by, lost in wonder over the patient subtlety the old man had displayed in reaching the secret of that unfinished letter.

When Cathcart had finished the letter he inclosed it in an envelope which he sealed. As he handed it to Dorison he said:

"Take that to Mr. Eustace to-morrow. It is too late to-night. I have sealed it, because I have asked Mr. Eustace not to mention to you a certain matter which I think well to be concealed from you for a time."

Dorison was now too well accustomed to the peculiar frankness of the old man to either wonder at or combat it. As he received the letter he said:

"Do you intend to cause the arrest of this Langdon right away?"

"No. Not until I have verified some matters and have obtained some further information concerning him, that I may use to wrest a confession from him."

"He may escape you."

"No, he suspects nothing, and besides he is shadowed every step he takes—by more than one too."

The hour being late, Dorison departed.

CHAPTER XXI.

AN UNEXPECTED TURN.

WHEN Dorison left the house in which were Cathcart's rooms, he was still in a whirl and confusion of thought. The dream he had entertained for eight years seemed on the point of realization. If the old detective were to be believed, it was even then practically realized. And the revelation had come, so far as he was concerned, at a moment when he was sunk into the deepest pit of despair—when the case looked darker and more hopeless than ever.

So marvelously had it all worked out, thought Dorison as he walked along—so strangely had he been led by impulse to return to the city; and so curiously had he been brought into relation with Mr. Nettleman and then into connection with the murder of Anne Farish, thus bringing him again into relations with Cathcart, that he could not but feel that he was in the hands of a Power whose movements he could not even attempt to comprehend.

As in a dream he walked along. The house occupied by the old detective was further from Broadway than from the Bowery. So it came that he had some distance to walk before he reached the former street.

He was aroused by the noise of a stumble behind him, and turning quickly received simultaneously a severe blow upon his left forearm, a blow evidently intended for his head, and so powerful as too send him to the pavement. At the same time he heard a cry.

"Ah, you rascals!"

This cry frightened his assailants, who dashed across the street and were lost in the darkness.

By the time the one who cried out had come running up, Dorison, faint with pain, had struggled to his feet.

"The woman was right. I should have heeded her warning," he muttered, confusedly, to the man who had come to his assistance, and who was none other than the officer Cathcart had instructed to follow Dorison as a protection.

"You must return at once to the chief," said the officer. "Are you much hurt?"

"My arm pains me a good deal," replied Dorison, "but it is better than if it were my head."

The officer hurried him to Cathcart's apartments.

The old detective comprehended the situation before he could be informed by the officer.

"Where were you hit?" he asked.

"On the left arm," replied Dorison.

Quickly and gently the old man bared the injured member.

"I am not a surgeon," he said, as he manipulated the arm, "but I can generally tell whether bones are broken or not."

He looked serious as he plied it. To the officer he said, "Get a coach as quickly as you can."

Leading Dorison to a lounge he laid him upon it, saying, "Rest there a moment; I cannot tell whether your arm is broken or not. We will go immediately to a surgeon. By Heavens!" he cried to himself, "that is an idea, and he is not far off."

He sprang to his bureau and opening the lower drawer took out a light gray wig and beard. With a rapidity that astonished Dorison, watching him in great pain as he was, the old detective put them on, and with the use of cosmetic, rouge and powder, presented in a moment an entirely different face and head. Darting into an adjoining room he issued a moment or two later in a black broadcloth suit. To put a gold chain around his neck and to assume a gold eye-glass secured by a small gold chain, was the work of a moment more, and when completed, he was a prosperous merchant or banker, ready to receive the announcement of the officer who entered, that the carriage was ready.

The interest of this strange proceeding was so great to Dorison that he had not asked a question, contenting himself with watching.

"Come," said Cathcart, "I will take you to a physician—a surgeon."

As Dorison, with the help of the others, arose, Cathcart said to the officer, "You are to go with us."

After Dorison had been placed in the carriage Cathcart told the driver to go to No. — Tenth Street, Dr. Fassett.

Even this conveyed nothing to Dorison, somewhat dazed with the pain he was enduring.

Dr. Fassett was in, and they were at once taken into his consulting room.

The surgeon bared the arm and examined it.

"I should say this injury was inflicted with a sand club. What are the circumstances?"

Before Dorison could reply, Cathcart interfered.

"Robbery, I should say. This young man, who is my nephew, was passing along Bond Street. My friend and myself were some distance behind him, when three men rushed from a place of concealment upon him. He heard them, for he turned, and a blow aimed for his head fell upon his arm. My friend cried out, 'Ah, you rascals!' and they fled without inflicting further injury. Calling a carriage, I drove right here, for I had heard my friend Eustace speak of your skill."

The surgeon had been manipulating the arm while Cathcart was talking.

"No bones are broken, I am sure," he said. "Take him home immediately and apply cloths dipped in hot water, as hot as he can stand it, and keep this up constantly for four or five hours. Then to-morrow morning bring him here to me before ten o'clock."

The physcian was curt, prompt, and imperative. Cathcart was disposed to engage him in conversation. But Dr. Fassett ended further talk by saying:

"I have told you what to do. You must not

detain me. I have an important case, and must go out now."

"Can we not set you down where you want to go?" asked the old detective.

"What you want to do," said the doctor, "is to get your nephew under treatment of hot water as soon as you can."

There was nothing left on this but to go, and they did, with very bad grace upon the part of the old detective.

"That was a misplay," he said, as he entered the carriage. "I hoped to be able to talk with him so as to bring in Langdon. I want to know what the doctor knows about him. Not much, perhaps, but everything counts in this business. However, I will have a chance at him to-morrow morning."

"That was the physician that knocked Miss Eustace down, on Broadway, with his horses," said Dorison faintly. "He did not recognize me."

Arriving at Dorison's apartments, to which they were rapidly driven, Cathcart and the officer devoted themselves to the treatment recommended by the surgeon, after which, and putting Dorison into his bed, Cathcart dismissed the officer, with instructions to go to his rooms in Bond Street early in the morning, and bring what mail he might find there to him before nine. Then he laid himself down on the lounge to sleep.

The treatment he had been subjected to eased the pain that Dorison had been suffering from, yet he lay a long time unable to sleep. The events of the

day and evening had been many and startling. They were destined to have a very considerable influence upon his life. Just what, he could not tell, but one thing was certain, it would now be turned into another channel than that he had followed for the past eight years. Though he tossed on his bed because of the excitement of the day, Cathcart slumbered so peacefully and easily, that Dorison became unreasonably provoked with him.

However, as the morning light streamed into the windows, he fell into a sleep, from which he was aroused shortly after eight by Cathcart and bidden to dress and partake of the breakfast he had sent for. He was barely prepared for it before the officer entered with Mr. Cathcart's mail.

Among the letters was a telegram which Cathcart opened. Reading it, he handed it to Dorison, with an expression of satisfaction and the remark:

"Confirmations are beginning to come."

Dorson read it. It ran:

"Langdon was known as Harry Farish here seven years ago—then a mere boy; afterwards got into prison. Turned up in Chicago five years ago as Harry Langdon. See letter mailed to-night."

"That settles that part of the theory," remarked Cathcart.

Having partaken of the breakfast, Cathcart proposed to set out to call upon Dr. Fassett.

To this Dorison demurred. His arm, though stiff and sore, however needed no more treatment than had been given it.

But Cathcart said:

"No; I took advantage of your accident to get to Dr. Fassett naturally, and we must go to fulfill the purpose I was balked in last night. How much Fassett may know about Langdon is uncertain, but I propose to obtain all he does know. Your injury gives us the natural excuse."

Therefore they set out. On arriving at the house of the physician and entering, the reception room was found to be not only full, but actually crowded.

Dr. Fassett happened to be in the hall at the moment of entering, and said:

"I am afraid you will have to wait a little time, for I have a nice operation on hand." To his attendant he said, "James, take these gentlemen into my private office," and disappeared.

The attendant was evidently astonished. "I've been with Dr. Fassett three years," he said as he led the way, "but I've never known this to occur before, though I've seen them sitting in the hall before this."

Cathcart whispered to the officer to remain in the hall.

The private office of the physician was a small room, evidently an extension from the main building, for it was lighted pleasantly from the side.

Between the two windows was a small roller-top desk. In the center a flat table where the physician evidently did his writing. At one window was a large operating-chair, but devoted by its owner to the purpose of ease. A low easy-chair, into which Dorison dropped, was on the side of the center

table, opposite to that on which the writing-chair stood. In the corner was an iron safe, the heavy door of which was open, the inner one only being closed.

So soon as the door was shut upon the attendant Cathcart began a minute examination of the room, much to Dorison's annoyance, who thought his companion was displaying an impertinent curiosity.

He even opened the portfolio of the doctor and turned over its leaves. Between two of them was a letter partly written, and Cathcart did not scruple to read it. Nor a letter addressed to the physician.

Unable to contain himself longer, Dorison protested, intimating that it was highly improper to read the private papers of a gentleman who had trusted them to the extent of turning them into his own private room.

To this Cathcart made no answer, but asked coolly:

"Didn't that woman say that Langdon had some hold on Dr. Fassett?"

"Yes."

"And young Eustace suspected something of the kind from the way in which Langdon treated Fassett?"

"Yes."

"Well, they are both right, I should judge, from these things. This letter," taking up one, "is signed 'Harry,' and intimates that they must have some more business from the doctor, or the fur will fly. This one," taking up the one partially com-

pleted, "tells Harry that there will be no more business; that he has been his servant as long as he ever will be, and that the end is reached, since he is now in a position to do for Harry what Harry threatened to do for the writer. It seems to be a declaration of independence."

He closed the book, leaving it precisely as he found it. On the mantel-piece he found a case of instruments and became much interested in it, taking out each one and examining it closely, putting them back one by one.

Every visible object in the room seemed to go under his touch; but when he went to the roller-top desk, and taking a wire from his pocket deliberately picked the lock and softly moved up the top, Dorison could stand it no longer.

"If you do not end this thing," he cried, "I certainly shall ask the doctor to come here."

"Be quiet," said Cathcart contemptuously. "Everything is grist that comes to my mill."

His search was not rewarded, and he closed the desk.

The safe now claimed his attention. The key had been left carelessly in the inner door; calmly turning it he threw it open and as calmly and coolly inspected its contents. Perceiving in one of the pigeon-holes a bundle, he took it out and ran over the ends of it. This seemed to be interesting to him, for he closed the door, turned the key and walked to one of the windows. Taking off the elastics which bound it he shuffled the various papers

in his fingers and putting the rubber bands on again went back to the safe as if he intended to restore them,—then turning quickly on his heel, went to the door and called the officer, who was awaiting him in the hall.

To Dorison he now turned and said:

"I have found something which will throw some light on Harold Farish and the relations existing between him and Fassett."

Dorison was about to protest, but he observed that the old man's eyes were flashing fire.

To the officer who entered he said:

"I want you to sit down here and keep your mouth shut."

He put the package of papers in the inner pocket of his coat, and going to the center-table leaned against it, thrusting his hands in his vest-pockets and dropping his chin on his breast.

There was something so extraordinary in his manner that both men watched him silently.

Perhaps ten minutes elapsed, when the attendant opened the door and said that the doctor would see them.

Dorison rose to obey the summons, but Cathcart waved him back with an imperious gesture.

"Tell the doctor," he said, "to come here—it is important."

The attendant disappeared, and Dorison looked to the old detective for an explanation.

None was forthcoming.

In a moment more Dr. Fassett hurried in, with a

frown of impatience and annoyance clouding his brow.

"Close the door," said Cathcart to the officer.

Then stepping quickly to the physician and laying his hand on his shoulder he said:

"Dr. Fassett, I arrest you for the murders of Emma Farish and Anne Farish."

CHAPTER XXII.

STRANGE REVELATIONS.

THE doctor staggered back as white as the wall against which he fell.

Dorison and the officer sprang to their feet, astounded and horror-stricken. For a brief moment Dorison entertained the idea that Cathcart had taken leave of his senses.

But what thoughts either might have had were diverted by the mad rush the doctor made at Cathcart.

The officer and Dorison, despite his injured arm, leaped to the assistance of the old man.

Had Cathcart anticipated the attack? He was not, at all events, taken unaware: for stepping lightly aside, he caught the doctor by the throat, and would have himself incapacitated the infuriated man without the assistance promptly given him.

"You will not do another," he said fiercely to his prisoner.

Firmly held by the officer, with his arms twisted behind his back, the doctor was helpless. To make his hold more secure, the officer placed his knee against the doctor's back and bent him over backwards.

In impotent rage the doctor gnashed his teeth.

"How do you know this? It is a lie! It is a lie! You couldn't have known it," he cried huskily.

He made a mighty struggle to free himself, and Cathcart went to the assistance of the officer.

"Take the handcuffs from my inside pocket," said the officer to Dorison, who did as he was requested.

In a moment more they were snapped upon the struggling man's wrists. Even then he fought and wrestled until he was thrown down and his ankles tied with a stout twine.

"I did not come prepared for this sort of business," said the panting officer.

"None of us did," replied Cathcart. Then to the doctor he said:

"You do not help yourself by such struggles. I've had many a man in your fix before."

"What imp of hell are you?" hissed the physician from between his teeth.

"My name is Simon Cathcart," replied the old man quietly.

The name appeared to calm the doctor, and he muttered:

"'The Devil of the West!' Harry said he was in the city. Well," he cried aloud, "its a lie. Why do you charge me, one of New York's foremost physicians and surgeons, with such a thing?"

"Because you killed those two helpless and inoffensive women, that's why."

The cold, positive tone of the old detective enraged him again.

"Its a lie. You couldn't have known it. Nobody could."

"Bah!" replied Cathcart, "you're a baby. You don't even know enough to cover your tracks. When I first saw the bodies, I knew a physician, a surgeon, had done the job. You couldn't keep the shop out of it. You cut the carotid artery in each case, not as a bungler, but as a surgeon performs an operation."

The idea that the crime might be traced to a surgeon in this way had not occurred to the doctor, and he seemed frightened at the sagacious penetration displayed by the detective.

"You did it with a lancet," continued Cathcart. And taking the one the servant had found on the floor from his pocket, he added: "And with this lancet, which you foolishly left behind you after the second murder. And this lancet came from this case."

The old man crossed to the mantel-piece, and taking up the case, continued, as he opened it:

"It belongs to this set. It is precisely the same make—same tortoise-shell handle, and here is the place from which it came—a vacant place waiting for it since the 5th day of October. Bah! You haven't even attempted to cover your tracks. You, a smart man."

The physician, apparently crushed and humiliated, turned a look of horror upon the merciless old man.

Dorison, filled with pity for the poor wretch,

failing to realize that the murderer of his half-sister lay bound before him, thought Cathcart brutal in his triumph over the prisoner. But the old man had a purpose in the course he was pursuing.

"Bah! If you were as skillful a murderer as you are a surgeon, you would not have made tracking so easy. Your very skill as a surgeon undid you, and it was only a question as to when we would get around to you. Murder is a fine art a man said yesterday. When a man undertakes to do two in one night he wants to be a master of the art."

The man on the floor made a gallant effort to retrieve himself. He was not a coward. He had been overwhelmed by the unexpected blow. But now that vigorous brain came into action, he recovered self-possession, and was cool and master of himself.

"You are very keen," he said with a sneer. "Do you know that a thousand such cases of instruments can be found in the city, and that surgeons usually carry their lancets in their pockets. If you will permit one of these gentlemen to feel in my right-hand vest-pocket you will find another lancet exactly similar to the one you have in your hand."

The total change in the manner of the physician startled Dorison, and his words made him believe Cathcart had made a blunder in arresting the doctor on so slight a ground.

"I'll take your word for it," said Cathcart calmly. "And you take my word that I'll find the case to which it belongs in your consulting room."

The expression passing over the doctor's face assured Cathcart that his hazard had been a winning one.

Dorison experienced a revulsion, and was deceived, supposing that, unobserved by him, the old detective had made the discovery the previous evening when the doctor was examining his arm.

"Yes, you carried the lancet in your vest-pocket the night you went to Bleecker Street to kill that poor girl," continued Cathcart, "and you put it back in your vest-pocket when you hurried to East Sixteenth Street too kill the poor mother in the same manner. There, however, you left it on the floor behind you."

There was a rap at the door. Cathcart sprang to it hastily. It was the attendant desiring to tell the doctor that those in waiting were becoming impatient.

"Dismiss them all, and say that the doctor will be unable to see any more to-day," and he closed the door.

"There is no escape for you, Dr. Fassett. The whole of the story is plain. I will tell it, not because it will be new to you, but because it will show that there is no use for you to struggle against your fate.

"You committed a crime in your younger days. Harry Langdon, *alias* Harold Farish, was cognizant of it and held you so firmly in his grip that you were a slave to his orders."

"Ah, the doggish hound! He has informed on me, has he?" interrupted the doctor. "You have

him then, have you? Well, even then that proves nothing as to this charge."

"You knew he was a criminal, but you had no proof of it," continued Cathcart, as if Fassett had not spoken. "You knew there was evidence of his crimes in the hands of those poor women, his mother and sister."

Dorison was quite as much surprised at this as was the doctor, who could not perceive that the old man was doing some shrewd guess-work.

"You wanted that proof," continued Cathcart, "that you might be free from that slavery, against which your proud, arrogant spirit chafed. You determined to obtain it. You had information it was in the hands of the sister. She was in the costumer's shop in Bleecker Street, as you knew. You sought her there, and found her looking over documents you thought were the ones you wanted. You begged her to give them to you. You would not believe her when she told you she had them not. You threatened her, and when she insisted that those which she had in her hands were not what you wanted, you attempted to take them by force. She resisted, and in a moment of exasperation, without premeditation, frantic with rage and her resistance and mad with desire, you killed her and seized them. They were not what you wanted. You found that out after you had escaped by the rear, through the drinking saloon. They were letters written by Reuben Dorison to Emma Farish."

Notwithstanding there was the assumption of a

sneer upon the physician's face, there was in his eyes an expression of utter amazement, and he muttered to himself under his breath.

"Do you deny this?" asked Cathcart, sternly.

"Give me those slips," he said, turning sharply to Dorison. The young man was so absorbed in the vivid and graphic description the old detective was giving of the murder, as to believe for the time that he must have been an eye-witness of it, that Cathcart was forced to repeat the demand. Mechanically taking out his pocket-book he handed the slips to the old detective, a proceeding Fassett regarded with interest not unmixed with curiosity.

"These slips," continued Cathcart, holding them before the eyes of Fassett, were found in that room within a quarter of an hour after your departure—one on the floor, one in the hand of the murdered girl."

Taking out the package he had removed from the safe he slipped out two letters. The expression of curiosity fled from the doctor's eyes; in its stead came one of alarm. He quickly glanced at the safe in the corner. He realized it all in that one glance.

A frightful imprecation broke from his lips.

"You are a thief," he yelled.

"No," calmly replied the old man. "I have only taken that which you thieved on the night you murdered. You see how these slips fit into the letters from which they were torn in your struggle with the poor girl. We will read the whole letter now."

Baltimore Md- 1859

My dear Emma

Business again detains me beyond the time I hoped to reach home and I fear that a trip further South is in prospect.

I write hastily to say this to allay any alarm you may have over my return to care for the matter you will about. At present I can only repeat what I have so often said to you before, that our experience is almost without parallel and that for the sake of our children and your place in life as well as my own we must see it to the end and make the best of it. Your failure to have received before anything else But one person is my confidant as I be, Hubert Clavering Eustace, to whom upon anything occurring to me, you can will go with the letter I have given you - and demand all the securities entrusted to him for your use and benefit. He I know them under this understanding and will yield them to you.

Affectionately Your husband in fact if not acknowledged

Reuben Dorison

The detective, laying the letter upon the table, turned to Dorison, saying:

"There is a message from the grave of your father, John Dorison."

"Who?" cried Dr. Fassett. "Who is that? That is Dudley."

"No," said Cathcart. "That is John Dorison, son of Reuben, who for eight years has suffered for the sins of Harry Langdon, your friend, his half-brother. He is the half-brother of your victim."

All of this was beginning to tell upon the bound man, and he showed it in his face.

"Great God!" he cried. "What a revelation!"

Cathcart waited for him to say more, but the doctor relapsed into gloomy silence. The old man took up the other.

"This slip,"* he said, "fits into this letter, and we will have some more testimony from the dead."

"The letters from which these slips were torn were found in your safe. Do you want more proof? Well then, you hastened to Sixteenth Street, knowing that you had killed one person needlessly and yet must have the documents. There you found the mother alone, and there you demanded the documents and were refused. You were desperate and reckless now. The struggle this time did not precede the murder. Your hand was in, and, quickly dispatching her, you ravished her bosom of the documents you had waded through blood to secure. With them in your hands, dropping your lancet as you went, you hurried away, and"—hesitating a moment, Cathcart added, "and with them in your pocket you hastened to the hospital, where you were already overdue, and with calm hand set a man's broken leg."

"Here are the documents," continued the old

* See facsimile letter on next page.

Boston May 10th 1860

My dear Emma

Whether it be our sins, or our misfortunes, the fact are as they are. Far be it from me to even think of upbraiding you. You have taken a burden of life in the most noble and self sacrificing way I ever knew woman to do. For the sake of the children you are mother to and I the father, we must bear our ills in some manner. What must be blamed is our own hasty and thoughtless action. All ills have sprung from that. You have often assured me, that you believed I was so guided by no wicked intent. As God is my judge, this is still true.

The coroner Harrod is pursuing ~~yours~~ me as well as yourself. Let us hope that it is one of the chastisements of Gods wrath and that when he has taken a few wild oats, he will see the error of his ways and at last turn. I am glad you had in your possession sufficient funds to take good the consequences of what in our old and more unwise years would have been called crime, but which in one so young could only be thoughtless. Here I will return the money to you upon my return

Believe me no time shall ever conceal, though we must make it by me the world and deem myself

Yours affec to embarrass

Reuben Dow Crane

detective, tapping the package he held in his hand, "forged notes and checks by Harold Farish, and other proofs of his crimes, the marriage certificates of Reuben Dorison and Emma Farish, and some other matters."

The poor wretch, completely overwhelmed by the overpowering circumstantiality of the proof piled up against him, gave up resistance.

He laughed, a bitter, reckless, despairing laugh.

"Yes," he said, "you know all. The devil himself must have been your informant, for you could not have guessed so correctly You have other proof behind. It is not likely you have exhausted everything yet. I confess it. It is fate. Fate has conquered me. I have tried to live down the first error, but it has followed me to the end and run me down. Lift me into a chair. I have nothing now to conceal."

The officer and Cathcart lifted the man from the floor and placed him in a chair.

Dorison, wrought up to the highest pitch, found himself full of pity for the despairing wretch, who had given up all hope and ceased to struggle against his fate.

"I might have lived a better life," said the doctor after he was seated. "I had the ability and I have already achieved eminence in my profession. But I began wrong. There is a taint in my blood. The wrong was begun before I was born. The truth is, I come from a long line of criminals. Some men are born to a tendency to this, that, and the other.

I was to crime. Heredity! You know so much, know all.

"When I was a boy, at a time my parents were cast into prison, I was taken from my family, as bad a one as Indiana ever saw, by a charitable man of Chicago, who, perceiving mental qualities in me superior to the ordinary run of boys, educated me. I went to college and then to a medical school. I repaid his kindness by ruining his daughter. That was the first beginning. To escape the consequences of that error I killed her, not purposely, but the result was the same, a fact discovered by a fellow medical student, Harry Farish. Then I employed him to assist me in covering my tracks. He was already bad, and shortly after, for some petty offense, had to run away. In Indianapolis he was detected in another and larger crime, and under the name of Fortescue was imprisoned. Released five years ago, he went to Chicago, under the name of Harry Langdon, where he associated himself with a band of thieves, robbing a bank with the connivance of a clerk. After this the gang came to New York. Langdon hunted me up and began his persecutions of me. I weakly submitted to the first threat, and they made me one of the gang in spite of myself—compelling me to use my knowledge of the interior of the houses I visited as a physician, so that they could rob them——"

"Ah, the mysterious robberies!" said Cathcart.

"Growing as I was into fame, reaching the highest places in my profession, I became wild, frantic, over

this slavery, and made this desperate effort to free myself—"

There was a rap at the door.

From the force of habit the doctor cried out:

"Well."

The voice of the attendant was heard in reply.

"Doctor, Mr. Langdon says he must see you on a matter that cannot be delayed a moment."

CHAPTER XXIII.

A SIGN IT IS OF EVIL LIFE.

CATHCART imposed silence with uplifted hand. "Ask the gentleman to step here," he called out.

Dorison, who had been a silent and awed witness of the rapid events, looked inquiringly at the detective for some indication of his purpose.

The old man was inscrutable.

While listening to Fassett, he had again leaned against the center-table in his favorite attitude—his hands in his vest-pockets.

As he heard steps advancing through the hall he went to the door, and while admitting Langdon, prevented the attendant from seeing into the room.

As the door closed upon the new comer, Langdon perceived Dorison, and started back in surprise and alarm.

Cathcart laid his hand upon Langdon's shoulder saying:

"You are my man, Harold Farish."

"Who the devil are you?" cried Langdon angrily.

The old detective pulled off his wig and beard.

"Simon Cathcart. You know me."

As he declared himself, he had shifted his position, so that Langdon, for the first time, saw Fassett bound in his chair.

"Oh!" he cried in a rage. "You have given me away, have you? This is what your independence meant, is it? Well, Simon Cathcart, do you know what this man is? He is a—"

"I know what he is well enough," interrupted the old man. "I know, too, that I have the leader of the new gang of burglars, when I have you."

"He is a fine one to 'peach'," growled Langdon viciously. "Send me up! Send me up! I'll be out some time to make hell for him."

"You will never be out in time to do that," said the physician, with a bitter and contemptuous laugh.

Something in the tone and manner of the physician disconcerted Landgon, yet he strove to maintain his air of bravado.

"You can't make a long term of it," he said to the detective. "You've first got to prove I was in any of the jobs."

"The charges against you are plenty, so are the proofs," remarked the old man. "For instance, you can be charged with inciting the attempt to murder my friend here—John Dorison."

"Who?" almost screamed Langdon. "That John Dorison? He?"

"Yes," calmly replied Cathcart, 'John Dorison, son of Reuben."

"My G——!" he exclaimed, overwhelmed.

"Yes," quietly repeated the old man. "It is not a pleasant thing to think that you endeavored to have your half-brother killed, is it?"

"What can this mean?—Dudley? Dorison?"

"But then," continued Cathcart, "that is not so bad as assisting in the murder of your mother and sister."

"No, no, no!" creid Langdon, frightened and horrified. "No, not that. I am bad enough, but not that. Oh Heavens, no! Not so bad as that."

The old detective, watching Fassett rather than Langdon, as he made the accusation, saw surprise steal over the face of the physician, quickly succeeded by malicious satisfaction, as if he had divined its purpose.

"You rascal!" cried Cathcart, turning viciously on Langdon, "what do you mean by denying complicity? Do you want me to think that, being innocent, you kept away from the house when you heard your nearest relatives had been murdered?"

"How could I go there?" whined Langdon. "To do so was to give myself away."

"You mean," sternly continued Cathcart, "you mean your mother had evidences of your forgeries in her possession, which you feared had fallen into the hands of the police."

Taken by surprise, Langdon confessed by his manner that the detective had spoken the truth.

"Well," said Cathcart, "you were right. They did fall into the hands of the police. Here they are," he continued, as he drew from his pocket the package he had taken from Fassett's safe.

"Here are the forged checks and notes of hand against Reuben Dorison, the payment of which through your poor mother, and of further sums to

prevent your prosecution, ruined Reuben Dorison, your father. Those will send you up for another term. You can be kept out of harm's way for many years."

Suddenly, with increased violence of voice and manner, Cathcart demanded:

"If you did not kill your mother and sister, who did?"

"I don't know," answered Langdon, with such anxious earnestness as would have carried belief with his words, if the old man had not already known. "I don't know. I did not dare to show myself. I was afraid I would be charged if those papers were found. I didn't even dare talk about it, though I have tried to find out."

"Um," growled Cathcart, as if he did not believe him.

There was silence as the old detective fixedly gazed upon the scamp.

It was Fassett who broke it.

"Look at me, Harold Farish!" he cried, his strong face convulsed with hatred, malice, and despair—fairly devilish in its aspect.

"Look at me," he repeated. "I did it. I killed your mother and sister."

"You!" gasped Langdon, "You! You!"

"Yes, I. And you were the cause. Take that to your false, black heart. Of all human devils I have known, you have been the most cruel and heartless. Since I have waded through so much blood, I wish I had killed you. Ever since we were

students together you have been my evil genius. When, in my trouble, I took you for a friend and adviser, you it was who put the evil thought into my head. When it resulted so unexpectedly fatal, you it was who suggested concealment. When I was climbing to fame and prosperity here, you it was who pounced upon me with this secret, and made me, a reputable physician, one of your band of burglars and assassins. It was to be free from you—to be your master, to be in possession of the proofs of your crimes you had told me of in your cups, that led me into murder. But as usual you lied. You said your sister held them, and not believing her, I killed her, to find you were the liar. Yes I killed them. And by all that's foul, if my hands were free, I'd kill you where you stand now."

Langdon was overwhelmed—he was stupefied by the revelation hurled at him with a malice that was fiendish.

The eyes of the physician, gleaming with foul hatred and murderous desire, held him fascinated.

"This is awful!" gasped Langdon.

Criminal as he was, stained with almost every crime as his hands were, he had a perception of depravity from which even he recoiled.

Dorison staggered to his feet in protest against the horror of the scene.

Even the officer was moved, and lifted his hands imploringly to Cathcart, as if appealing to him to end it. It seemed as if Fassett had been stripped

of all human qualities save that of speech, as if he had become a wild beast.

The old detective's purpose had been accomplished; he had obtained confessions from both; he had gotten all there was to be known, and so he brought the awful scene to a close.

Pointing to Langdon he said to the officer:

"Take that man at once to Police Headquarters—to Captain Lawton, and tell him that you bring him the leader of the gang of burglars who have bothered him so long. Tell him to lock the man up until I can come to him."

Dazed and stunned, Langdon obediently turned to follow the officer.

"Stop," cried Cathcart, "Let us have no mistakes."

Taking from his pocket a leathern strap he buckled it on the wrists of the physician. Then, and not until then, he removed the handcuffs and placed them on Langdon, his hands crossed behind his back.

"Now you can go," said he, "and arriving there send two men at once. Hurry you, and let them hurry."

As the officer left the apartment with Langdon, Cathcart sat down at the writing-table.

Taking out a memorandum book he began making entries as coolly as if nothing out of common had occurred.

So calm, so composed, so inscrutable was he that Dorison, wound up to a pitch of intense excite-

ment and nervousness, felt he could willingly horse-whip him for his imperturbability.

Cathcart turned to Fassett abruptly.

"You know I am going to lock you up. Is there anything you want to do here?"

The question startled the physician, but he collected his thoughts.

"Not here," he replied after a moment. "There is something I do want to do. Write!"

Cathcart did not comprehend him.

"Write at my dictation," ordered the physician sternly.

The old detective wrote the names of a number of people, with their addresses, as dictated by Fassett. When he had finished, the physician said:

"Those are the names of patients who are dangerously ill. They are likely to die if they do not receive proper medical attendance. Send that list to Dr. Allingham. Let him attend them; he is competent."

Dorison looked upon the man with open-mouthed astonishment.

"Great Heavens!" he said to himself. "Here is a man who by his own confession has killed three people and wishes to kill a fourth, yet at such a time takes the precaution to save the lives of others."

"Is that all," asked Cathcart.

"No; I want to write a letter to that obstinate old fool Dr. Roy, with whom I have had a controversy on heredity. I could have overcome him if I could have cited my own case in proof of my con-

tention that the impulse to crime is an hereditary tendency. I want to do it now. Then I want to make my will."

"Is this bravado?" asked Dorison in thought. "Or a phase of human nature of which I have had no conception?"

"Loosen my hands until I can do these things and I will thank you. I will attempt no harm to you."

"I am not afraid you will," said Cathcart as he helped the physician to hobble to his desk with the roller top. Having seated his prisoner he loosened his hands.

Throwing up the top, the doctor began to write hastily. From time to time he suspended his work, leaned back in his chair with his eyes on the ceiling as if thinking profoundly, playing with the locket dangling from his watch-chain.

There was no agitation, no nervousness, no trepidation. He could not have written more composedly, nor with greater concentration of mind, had his hands been free from blood and his soul unstained by crime.

He wrote a long time, and when he finished he inclosed the sheets he had filled in an envelope, which he addressed and handed to Cathcart.

"You will do me the favor to hand that to Dr. Roy. He can't answer that argument. Now for the will."

He thought a moment. Now it was he betrayed an agitation he had not previously shown. In his nervousness he wrenched the locket he played with

from his watch-chain. Apparently unconscious of his act, he placed it in his mouth, turning it over and over and biting it. Finally he spat it out on the desk, ruined.

"Oh, this will never do," he cried, and addressed himself to the work of drafting his will. It was the work only of a moment.

When he had finished he said:

"You two must witness this—my will. It is brief. Let me read it.

"'I, Arthur Fassett, physician and surgeon, being of sound mind and health, but in the face of death for crime committed, do will and bequeathe all the property, whether it is money, stock, bonds, chattels, houses or real estate of whatever kind of which I am possessed at my death, to the Home Hospital.'

"I have no relatives," he added bitterly. "My family have all died either in prison or on the gallows. So no one will contest the will."

The two signed as he desired,—Cathcart as a matter of course; Dorison, with strange emotions.

Having appended his own name, he handed this also to Cathcart.

At this moment there was a stir at the front door. Cathcart told Dorison to admit the officers. As they entered the room the old detective said:

"Handcuff this man:"

"It is useless," said the physician. "I do not intend to resist."

"Perhaps," replied Cathcart dryly and cynically. "Do as I tell you, officers."

The physician said appealingly:

"Let me sit here a moment—only a moment—it will not be for long. I shall not detain you long—long—it is—not—for—" . .

Cathcart sprang to him.

The physician's chin had fallen on his breast and his eyes were glazed and rolling.

He roused up with an effort.

"It is near the end," he said chokingly. "I have taken poison. Death grips me. In forty seconds I will be dead. I had it all ready for this emergency."

He sank immediately into a stupor, and within the time he had predicted his heart ceased to beat.

Overcome by this culmination of the past hour's excitement, weakened as he was by the injury he had received, Dorison fainted.

As unconsciousness closed upon him, he dimly heard Cathcart say:

"He has cheated the gallows."

When Dorison was restored, the old detective was bathing his head. Looking about him he saw the physician stretched upon the floor, calm in death.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CATHCART CLOSES HIS BOOKS.

DORISON had sustained another shock, and he was carried into the consulting room. The attendant, still sitting at the door and unconscious of the tragedy enacted in the inner room, was dispatched for brandy, which, being administered to Dorison, restored him a second time.

Cathcart went back to give instructions to the officers. Reappearing he said to Dorison:

"Come. We will go."

Dorison followed him out into the street, feeling as if he had escaped from a charnel house. They walked to Fourth Avenue, indeed to the Bowery before either spoke. Then Dorison asked:

"Where did he get the poison?"

"It was concealed in that locket. He opened it in his mouth. I ought to have my head cuffed for not taking precautions."

"It is better as it is," said Dorison.

They walked some distance before Cathcart replied.

"Perhaps," he said. "The lesson is the same. Crime cannot be committed without detection. Well, the whole search is over. You can assume your own name. It is cleared. I have done all

I set out to do. I can do no more. I close the books.

"More?" cried Dorison. "You've done all. You've done all that could be done. You've done everything. It is wonderful."

"Yes," replied the old man complacently. "It is pretty fair. It will show these New York people that the old man hasn't lost his cunning—that he can work in New York as well as in the West."

"When did you first suspect the doctor?"

"This morning, when I went into his room with you."

"What!" cried Dorison, wholly surprised. "This morning?"

"Yes," replied the old man. "Until then I suspected Langdon. I saw that letter from Langdon and the partially written reply, and the case of instruments to which the lancet belonged. But that did not arouse my suspicions. I thought perhaps Langdon had taken the lancet. But when I got that package from the safe, the whole thing burst upon me in a moment. The letters and lancet took their place at once in the story, and I acted upon inspiration."

Dorison was so astonished that he was silent for a moment. Then he asked:

"Was Langdon's coming an accident too?"

"Purely an accident, so far as I was concerned. Probably he had come to know that after the attack upon you last night you were brought to Dr. Fassett,

and his visit of this morning had some reference to that attack. What, I cannot determine."

They walked along again in silence.

"What about Pittston?"

"He is shadowed and will be arrested during the day. They will all be sent up."

As they turned into Bleecker Street from the Bowery, Cathcart said:

"What is to be further done to set you right must be done by Mr. Eustace. He can do it by patronage of you. Go to him without delay. Give him that letter I gave you yesterday. Tell him all that has occurred to-day. One thing more."

They had stopped at the corner of Mulberry Street, and he took from his pocket the package, from which he drew a paper, on which there was writing in red ink.

"Take this," he said. "It is better with you than in the report I must make, since it has not entered into the murder case. Langdon could not have known of its existence or he would have had it. Fassett could not have known its meaning, or, if he did, did not care. But why these women, whose fortunes had gotten pretty low, didn't use it I cannot tell. No one will know now. Perhaps they were afraid to get the money. It belongs to you now, by every right. It is your father's order for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The amount, now swollen to nearly a quarter of a million, has been held in trust by Mr. Eustace, subject to that order, for many years. You are rich. Give

that paper to Mr. Eustace. He will tell you all about it. I am going to Police Headquarters to write my report. Our relations are ended, but I hope our acquaintance is not."

"I should hope not, indeed," replied Dorison, warmly.

"Well, go to Eustace now. Come to my rooms to-morrow, and tell me about your interview with him."

CHAPTER XXV.

CONCLUSION.

EARLY in the summer of 1889, the *Gallia* arrived at the port of New York after a prosperous voyage.

On its passenger list was this entry:

"Mr. and Mrs. John Dorison, two children and maid."

An old gentleman, tall and distinguished, accompanied by a younger man, middle-sized, plump and golden-haired, stood on the wharf impatiently awaiting the throwing up of the gang-plank.

When the plank was placed in position, with an agility his years scarcely warranted, the old gentleman rushed up and embraced a lady, who, smiling through glad tears, stood awaiting him, beside John Dorison, by whose hand that of the old gentleman was warmly shaken.

The lady, presenting a lad of five years and a baby girl of two, to the old gentleman, bade them know him as "Grandpapa," and also to the younger gentleman, who, she said, was "Uncle Charley."

"Ah!" said the old gentleman, as he gazed proudly on the lady, "my dear, you were beautiful as Evelyn Eustace, but as Evelyn Dorison you are lovely."

And young Eustace said:

"And, father, I think John is to be complimented on his beauty too."

"Happiness and sweet content of mind are great beautifiers, Charley my boy," replied Dorison, laughingly.

He advanced to greet an old man with white hair, keen, bright and restless eyes, who presented himself with a contorted face which Dorison knew, if on-lookers did not, was intended for a smile of gladness, and whose hands he grasped warmly, saying that his home coming would not have been complete if he could not have grasped the hand of him to whom he owed the possibility of his happiness and prosperity.

THE END.

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